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SEA-KINGS OF BRITAIN

ALBEMARLE TO HAWKE

BY

G. A. R. CALLENDER, B.A.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, OSBORNE

WITH MESSRS:

LONGMAN, GREEN & CO.'S

COMPLIMENTS.

WITH MAPS AND PLANS



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN:

HAWKINS, DRAKE, HOWARD,

GRENVILLE, BLAKE.

WITH 14 MAPS AND PLANS.

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PREFACE

THE following pages contain short lives of the great Admirals from the death of Blake to the birth of Nelson. In writing them I have had before me a leaflet on Naval History, issued for the information of Midshipmen, "Study is to be directed," it says, "to a clear understanding of the events leading to . . . war; the influence of foreign policy on the operations of the several campaigns; the articles of peace; the general plan on which the war was conducted; the operations of the Naval and Military forces in so far as they are related; the defence and attack of commerce, and its influence on the main operations; and any progress in organization, tactics, or ship design which are features of the period under review." The present work makes no claim to be considered an exhaustive treatise. It is put forward as a simple introduction to the History of the Navy, which may pave the way to a closer investigation along the lines of the scheme prescribed.

No volume dealing with the present subject would be complete without a profession of homage to Sir J. Knox Laughton. To Mr. Julian Corbett also I acknowledge myself deeply indebted: without the guidance derived from his works, this volume could hardly have been undertaken. To Mr. C. Godfrey, Mr. L. B. Corbett, Mr. W. L. Bunting and other friends I desire to return hearty thanks for the benefit of their kind advice while my sheets were passing through the press.

G. A. R. C.

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When we read of the deeds that our fathers will fight;

Let us pray for their spirit, disdaining to brag;

That when called to fight as of old they fought,

We may know how to fight

For the Flag,

How to fight and die for the Flag.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

ALBEMARLE

BORN 1608—DIED 1670

An honest Man's the noblest work of God.—POPE.

The Duke of Albemarle demeaned himself in such a manner to the prince he had obliged, as never to seem to overvalue the services of George Monk.
CHARLES II.

WHEN George Monk took his stand on the beach at Dover on 26th May, 1660, he did so not as a Dictator about to abdicate his powers, not as a rival envious of fortune's favourite, not as a privileged subordinate willing to allow to another the shadow of authority while retaining for himself the substance: he stood there to voice the desires of his country, to personate her loyalty. England reposed implicit trust in him, and did so not in vain, for even by the confession of his enemies the restorer of monarchy never betrayed a trust, or broke his word.

In the desperate days of exile Charles had sent a warm appeal to the Governor of Scotland. His punishment, if merited, he could have borne in silence, but its injustice cried aloud to the land that loved the Stuarts, and to the man who had fought and suffered for their cause. Promptly and without comment Monk sent the letter on to the Protector, whose estimate of his loyalty needed no confirmation. Later, when the clouds lowered and Cromwell himself liked not the atmosphere, men persuaded him that the general was playing false. The humour of the suggestion appealed irresistibly to the Protector, and before the jest lost its savour he wrote as follows to his deputy: "There be that tell me there is a certain cunning fellow in Scotland called George Monk,

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who is said to be in wait there to introduce Charles Stuart; I pray use your diligence to apprehend him, and send him up to me."

The death of Cromwell laid the way open for Monk. The baton of the Lord Protector dropped at his feet, and was his for the picking up. But behind the form of government was the England that he served. Martial law was now distasteful to her, and the faithful soldier proclaimed its dissolution. Monk set self aside, if he ever thought of self, and on this happy May-Day waited at Dover for the King.

Attended by Admiral Montagu, who had brought him over in the *Royal Charles*, the King came ashore. "The general received him with becoming duty, but His Majesty embraced him with an affection so absolutely entire and vehement, as higher could not be expressed by a prince to a subject; he embraced and kissed him." Monk took the kiss sedately, and introduced Mr. Mayor, who offered a Bible for His Majesty's acceptance. His Majesty, winning all hearts by a gracious reference to the Father who had called him home, accepted the proffered gift which he described as that which of all things on earth he loved the most. And so amid thronging and adoring crowds the King came to his own again, and passed to London, "the bells ringing and the people with the loudest exclamations welcoming him and praying for him; the young virgins strowing the way with herbs and flowers and all the gaieties that art, nature or cost could provide."

As he rested at Canterbury upon his way the King conferred upon his greatest subject the Order of the Garter. Afterwards he allotted Sir George the estate of Newhall in Essex with a yearly revenue of seven thousand pounds, called him to be a member of his Privy Council, appointed him a Gentleman of the Bedchamber and Master of the Horse, created him Captain-General of the Forces, and Lord-Lieutenant of the counties of Middlesex and Devonshire, made him Lord of the Treasury, and Viceroy of Ireland, and raised him to the peerage as Baron Monk of Potheridge, Beauchamp and Tees, Earl of Torrington, and Duke of Albemarle.

* Monk had a horror of political letters. When he opened communications with the exiled prince, he bade his couriers learn their messages by heart. It is true that he could not trust himself to spell, but this was not his reason.

If the coming of the King had ended Monk's career nothing could have been more appropriate. The men of his day were gone. The reign of the Puritan was over. New faces were about the throne. Looser fashions replaced the old. The Duke himself had served in many capacities. He had acquired fame alike as Admiral, General and Administrator. His politic great deed set men debating of his statesmanship as if all else were merely accidental. He had done all things well and needed rest. But his self-negation endeared him to people and to King; and his deeds proclaimed him guardian of the throne. Rest was impossible for such a one.

The Restoration was accompanied by a political change upon the continent, less striking perhaps but equally significant. The intervention of England in the struggle, which the two leading powers had maintained untiringly ever since the close of the Thirty Years' War, had in 1659 brought a tardy cessation of hostilities at the Peace of the Pyrenees.* This treaty marked a definite step in the decadence of Spain. The defeat of the Armada had forever destroyed her claim to a world-wide empire; the Peace of the Pyrenees destroyed her claim to be regarded as the most important power in the narrower limits of Europe. But if the treaty ruined the fabric of the Spanish Hapsburgs, it established the edifice which Richelieu and Mazarin had raised in France. Richelieu, the architect, had planned the building which was to overtop all others in Western Europe: Mazarin, the master-builder, had reached the coping-stone. At home the monarchy had trampled down the envious noblesse; abroad the armies of France had triumphed gloriously. There was no power in continental Europe that would dare to lead its armies against France: there was no power in France that would dare to lift a finger against the King. The House was erected, very solid, very impressive, at unity with itself. One thing more was needful. The walls were up, the roof was on, and . . . the funds were exhausted.

The Bourbons needed a business manager who combined with large ideas and unconscious rectitude an unrivalled genius for economy. Such a man was at hand.

* Cp. *Hawkins to Blakes*, p.

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Jean Baptiste Colbert went to the base and bedrock of finance. He did everything in his power to foster trade at home, to create new industries, and invigorate the old. He bettered the means of transport by digging canals, mending the roads, and improving the breed of horses. He sent forth Frenchmen to Canada, to the Mississippi valley, to the West Indies, to Africa, to India; and by so doing he extended French markets and evoked new needs for home consumers. Each day measured the growth of a mercantile marine which plied between the homeland and her colonies; and the protection of the merchant service called a war fleet into being.

When Colbert came into office, the French Navy did not exist. So excellent were his methods that ere twelve years had passed France had a fighting fleet of 196 vessels, and had acquired a faculty for shipbuilding which combined the sturdy workmanship of the English with the prolific output of the Dutch. To accommodate his splendid force Colbert reconstituted Brest, created Toulon and Rochefort, and set to work upon Cherbourg.

Had Colbert been king, the French might to-day be the proud possessors of an oceanic Empire. He was but a servant. The direction of the destiny of France lay in the hands of Louis XIV.

In one sense Louis was certainly the greatest King that France or any other European country ever produced. He had not the military genius of Caesar, or the wit of Charles II. He had not the constructive ability of Peter I, or the destructive ability of Napoleon. But in him Kingship and Majesty found for all time their ideal exponent. As he strutted through the Salle des Glaces at Versailles gorgeously habited in cloth of gold, fair long periwig, and satin shoes, he really believed himself the visible presence of God upon earth, the anointed of heaven with majesty unassailable by all the water in the rough rude sea; and to the very end he retained, even under the cruel lash of ruthless experience, at least some portion of a simple faith in his theoretical omnipotence. As a good actor will draw tears of pity for the imaginary sorrows of King Lear, so Louis' grandeur imposed on his contemporaries. Those who lived at Versailles had often enough good cause to believe in the might of his sceptre, but the European powers were similarly deceived. From 1660 to 1715

the *Roi Soleil* was the self-constituted centre of the European system, around which the lesser courts described adorning circles.

Louis was deceived by the semblance of power, but he was certainly not weak. He found himself the happy possessor of the edifice that Richelieu had planned, and he determined from the first to be master of it. When Mazarin died* he became his own Prime Minister, and for fifty years he plodded at affairs of State for eight hours every day. Every matter of public importance was referred directly to him, and even Colbert himself became in a new sense the literal servant of the King. With France supreme in Europe, with the monarchy supreme in France, and with all the departmental paraphernalia that constitutes monarchy embodied in Louis himself, little wonder that the Grand Monarque occupied the centre of the stage. There may have been make-believe in his greatness, but his acting carried conviction.

Had Louis been one of the world's great men, he might have made Colbert's ambitions his own. But he lacked foresight and imagination. For him, the Peace of the Pyrenæes was no final chapter to a threadbare theme, but a tiresome interruption in an interesting tale. The boundary between France and Spain was natural, but the boundary between France and the Spanish Netherlands was entirely artificial. In the days of Clovis and Charlemagne, France had extended northwards to the Rhine. Now she was shut off from her natural frontier by a power she had recently chastised. The natural riches of the nether land, its commercial prosperity, the excellences of its sea-board and the advantages of its situation gave ample reason for Spain's anxiety to keep it; but Spain had been conquered, and what had been a trespass in the past now became an exasperating anachronism.

In 1665, four years after Mazarin's death, Philip IV, the other signatory of the Pyrenean treaty, followed the wily Cardinal to the grave. He had been twice married. Maria Theresa, the only surviving child of his first wife, had sealed the Franco-Spanish pact by her union with Louis XIV. Charles, the son of a second wife, inherited the vast Spanish patrimony. Any claim accruing to the Princess was at her marriage voluntarily abandoned; but Louis discovered a quaint custom among the musty law-books of

* Louis was born in 1638, succeeded to the throne in his fifth year, and was not quite twenty-three at the time of the Cardinal's death (1661.)

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Brabant, whereby the daughter of a first wife must inherit private property before the son of a second. A law about private property in Brabant had nothing to do with the kingly succession in the Netherlands. But those who censure Louis would find truer cause for blame in his failure to discern that the proper destiny of France lay on the sea.

Louis knew that his claim to the Low Countries would fall like a bolt from the blue, and set himself to prepare the ground. For Spain he cared little. England and the Dutch Republic were the only powers likely to dispute his right. He was troubled by the English possession of Dunkirk. He offered to buy it, induced Charles to negotiate, won that impecunious monarch to his side by an extravagant price and removed the probability of British interference. Holland of course he could not displace. But he courted her, endeavoured to prove that her interests coincided with his own, treated her as an equal, charmed her by his gracious condescension, and carefully withdrew her sting by the clauses of a formal alliance.

Fortune often comes to the assistance of him who knows his own mind, even when his motives are not above suspicion. In the midst of Louis' preparations the two powers, whom he had good reason to believe would challenge the probity of the French king, which he was bent, crossed swords and began to fight. Nothing he could have suited him better! When the two had trounced each other, and sat down to rest, then came his opportunity. In the First Dutch War the English were the stronger. His avowal of friendship with the States General necessitate active participation in the struggle. His ally could very well keep out of danger. Yet by masking their intentions he could create a diversion on behalf of the weaker side, and so prolong the contest until both combatants, and not merely one was exhausted.

THE SECOND DUTCH WAR. 1665-67.

Charles II had no love for the Dutch. He might with some reason ascribe to them the wanderings which he was so determined not to repeat. The government of the United Netherlands had been founded upon the ruins of the House of Stuart-Nassau: and

the peace of 1654 had bound the Republic closely to the English Regicides who had bargained for the exclusion of all his friends from what should have proved a second home to them. Charles himself had at first found refuge in France, but Cromwell's peace with Mazarin had disturbed his repose, and after many journeys he had accepted the hospitality of England's enemy Philip IV, and settled in the Spanish Netherlands. At Albemarle's suggestion he had in 1660 crossed the border into a land friendly to the British Republic, and found lodging at Breda, where his sister Mary, mother of William III, was still permitted to retain a residence. The burghers received him kindly, but their overtures were naturally distasteful.

On his return to England Charles found that his antipathy for the Dutch was most heartily shared by his subjects.

From the commercial point of view the First Dutch War had proved eminently disappointing. The English had challenged the claim of the Dutch to monopolize the world's trade, and had beaten them in half a dozen battles. They had won the right to trade on equal terms, but they had failed to make good what they had won. At the conclusion of hostilities they had been involved almost at once in a war with Spain, and were unable to reap the fruits of victory. But the Dutch recovered the ground they had lost, made the most of their ingrained business instincts, and snapped up the whole of the Spanish trade. The English rather pardonably regarded the Dutch ingenuity as an unscrupulous transgression, and the Dutch recovery as a deliberate infringement of treaty obligations.

The Duke of Albemarle put the matter bluntly. "The Dutch have too much trade, and the English are resolved to take it from them." This issue was somewhat broad for a fighting theme; but a pretext for war was soon found.

Sir John Hawkins had floated a trading concern, which in his own country found no imitator. The early slave-trade died at San Juan de Ulloa. The Portuguese, however, were swift in the Englishman's footsteps. They introduced the sugar-cane into Brazil, and finding it flourish they brought black labour from West Africa to tend the industry. They built Elmina on the Gold Coast, fortified it to withstand foes from land and sea, and there exchanged for negro slaves the goods they had brought from Europe. The Dutch, conquering the Portuguese, exploited West Africa more

thoroughly than their predecessors. In addition to Elmina, they founded Cape Coast Castle and the celebrated fort on the island of Goree situated under the shadow of Cape Verde.

The English visited West Africa from time to time for the natural products of the country, but the Dutch trade in niggers might have passed unchallenged but for transatlantic developments. Barbados, annexed by private British enterprise in the reign of James I, remained forlorn and poor until the settlers, learning from the Brazilian colonists, introduced the sugar-cane. The sugar-cane prospered and multiplied amazingly, and a few years after its introduction the island of Barbados fell before the expedition of Admiral Penn. The English then began at once to feel the need of imported labour, and cargoes of slaves were sent in ever-increasing numbers from the Gulf of Guinea. But this new demand, though it originated at the conclusion of the First Dutch War, passed wholly into the hands of those whom England had conquered. No more striking illustration could be found of the business capacity of the Dutch, and the nature of the grudge that the English bore them.

One of Charles's first acts after his Restoration was to inaugurate a new West African Company (1662). Fortified posts of the usual pattern were established on the Gold Coast and Gambia River to supply the British West Indian islands with the workers that they required. The Dutch on their side were determined to oust the intruders, and control a monopoly. The task was not an easy one, but from the number of complaints laid at the foot of Charles's throne, there can be little doubt that without interference from home, the Dutch merchants would have swept away the English by methods as vigorous as those they used when they cornered the cloves in Amboyna.

Charles with his own reasons for disliking the Dutch was glad of an excuse for lecturing them. Protests engendered counter-arguments, and the King growing impatient determined to smite the phlegmatic burghers upon the cheek. The blow was a little less dignified than that of the Council of State, but quite as well calculated to hurt.

In the autumn of 1663 Captain Robert Holmes was sent to the Dutch West African posts. Elmina held its own; but captured Cape Coast Castle and the strong twin forts at

Goree. In the summer of 1664, he crossed the Atlantic and descended like a wolf upon the Dutch settlements in America. He seized Manhattan Island and New Amsterdam, and re-christened them in honour of His Majesty's brother, James Duke of York. The Dutch of course were up in arms at once, and despatched their great Admiral to undo the mischief. "I hear," wrote Pepys at the end of December, 1664, "the news of our being beaten to dirt at Guinny, by De Ruyter and his fleet." Cape Coast Castle alone held out. De Ruyter not only recovered the Dutch posts but swept away the English. He then crossed the Atlantic and attacked Barbados.

At the beginning of 1665 Charles II declared war on the Dutch in the interests of British trade.

THE BATTLE OF LOWESTOFT

JUNE 3, 1665

Had Albemarle commanded in the first battle of the war, the result might well have been different. There were good reasons why he should not do so. The many marks of confidence bestowed upon him by the King made his presence in the capital more than ever necessary: the strain of the Restoration had preyed upon his health, leaving him subject to severe attacks of asthma: and he could hardly act in any capacity but the highest, a course which circumstances rendered impossible. The King's brother, the Duke of York, afterwards famous as James II, had received from the throne appointment as Lord High Admiral. Entering upon his duties with the keenest zest, he determined to command in chief against the Dutch. He called to his assistance the great sea-brethren of the previous war, now Sir William Penn and Sir John Lawson. Penn served on board the flagship, the *Royal Charles*, as Captain of the Fleet, and Lawson acted as second in command of the ducal Squadron. Prince Rupert, whose sea services had hitherto kept him apart from British naval officers, now brought his sterling qualities to their assistance, and hoisted his flag as commander of the White Squadron, while Admiral Montagu, who had received from the King the Earldom of Sandwich in return for his assistance at the home-coming, commanded the Blue.

Before leaving, the Lord High Admiral surrendered his shore

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duties to the Duke of Albemarle, confident that all would be well with the administration in the safe hands of an experienced sailor.

When war was declared, De Ruyter was at sea way endeavouring to exact restitution for Holmes's raid. The English, not ignorant of his value mobilized with precipitate haste to catch him at a disadvantage as he returned, or scatter his countrymen to the four winds prior to his arrival. The Dutch replaced De Ruyter by the Lord of Opdam, a gallant cavalryman, who commanded 100 good ships, and the services of Evertzen, who had fought with distinction in the First Dutch War. Opdam was instructed to guard the return of De Ruyter, and prey upon the Baltic fleet which was bringing home to England the lumber and cordage necessary for the refitting of her ships.

The English outnumbered the Dutch by one or two sail. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed. Never since the days of Edward III had the chief command been vested in so exalted a personage. On the eve of battle the fleet was joined by numberless young cavaliers anxious to prove their devoted loyalty to the throne by putting their precious lives in jeopardy. One of them, afterwards Charles's boon companion, the Earl of Dorset, composed on board the following verses, which in lovelorn mood he dedicated to the ladies left behind:—

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind,
Our tears we'll send a speedier way . . .
The tide shall bring them twice a day.

* The Evertzer family:—

JAN,
served in First War; retired
from service after Lowestoft;
returned on his brother's death
and died at the battle of St.
James's Day.

CORNELIUS the Younger,
served under De Ruyter in
the Thames and throughout
the Third Dutch War.

CORNELIUS the Old,
fought at Lowestoft, and
died on the first day of the
Four Days' Battle.

CORNELIUS the Youngest,
led the allied van at Beachy
Head.

Should forget Opdam chance to know,
 Our ~~Amphibian~~ story,
 The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe
 To fight the fort at Goree;
 Distance can they find
 From ~~the~~ who've left their hearts behind.

The presence of Penn on board the flagship was of the utmost importance. Sir William inherited the traditions of the Amphibian, whose military organisation had done so much to secure the defeat of the Dutch in the previous war. It is quite possible that at first he felt some dislike for an innovation proceeding from a landsman like the old general who now presided at the Admiralty: but his love of method and order, born of the sea, triumphed over his exclusiveness, and in 1665 there was no more enthusiastic admirer of the *Line* than the Duke of York's Naval Adviser. It is this which gives the battle of Lowestoft its chiefest interest, for there is little doubt that it was Sir William who inspired the INSTRUCTIONS issued by the Duke before the battle. These momentous by-laws were based upon the teaching of Blake and Monk, and instructed the commanders of His Majesty's ships "to keep the fleet *in one Line*". Thus while the order of array in the battles of the First Dutch War must remain a matter of conjecture; at Lowestoft, the close-hauled line ahead, approved by experience, met with the recognition it deserved, and henceforward became the order par excellence for the fighting fleet in action.

The ships were drawn up one behind another thereby to give free play to every broadside: their distance one from another, wide enough to prevent accidents, was limited to half a cable [100 yards] to strengthen defence; and the line thus formed was clapped upon a wind. The consequent movement was insufficient to interfere with the anvil strokes of war, and sufficient to make manœuvres possible, and facilitate co-operation between ship and ship.

When battles at sea came to be fought by two fleets parallel to one another, lying close to the wind on similar or opposite tacks, the battle was (as a rule) preceded by a skirmish to secure the windward position. This had undoubted advantages. The smoke was blown away from the "Windwards" to obscure the vision of the "Leewards". Under a canopy of smoke the

"Windwards" could unleash their fireships and send them down upon the breeze. The "Windwards" could determine when the battle should begin, holding their wind till ready, and bearing down at will upon their adversaries.* There was yet another advantage for the "Windwards," more valuable than all. They could mass their strength in one part of the Line, and overpower the corresponding portion of the enemy, whose position did not allow the same freedom of movement. Happily for the "Leewards" the Line Ahead was the best safeguard in such an emergency; and unless the "Windwards" had a marked preponderance of force, a massed attack was dangerous in that it weakened another part of the line before the ordered array of the foe. Unevennesses of the ground render such manœuvres possible on shore; but the task of winning a decisive battle with a fleet in line ahead was far from easy even with the assistance of the wind; and there were certain definite advantages in the leeward position which the battle that follows will reveal.

"The hostile fleets met off Lowestoft on 3rd June." There was a fine display of seamanship at the outset, as the wary wrestlers skirmished for the wind. The English were successful in this preparatory bout, and joined issue all along the line. Furious duels resulted. The *Orange* engaged the *Montagu*, and pressed home her attack so vigorously that the English ship would have succumbed had it not been for the *Royal James*, commanded by the Earl of Marlborough and his friend the Earl of Portland. The *Montagu* was rescued: but both the Earls were slain. The *Royal Charles* engaged Opdam's flagship the *Eendracht* [*The Union*], and found a sturdy foe. James showed a royal courage and repelled his assailants with spirit. While the contest proceeded his life was in momentary peril. At one time he was standing with Lord Falmouth, Lord Muskerry and Mr. Boyle,

* The order for the Line must not be interpreted as excluding the *Line Abreast*, which remained an integral part of the fighting scheme, both offensive and defensive. In the overtune preliminary to a battle the Leeward fleet would put themselves upon a wind and wait: the Windward would change from Line Ahead to Line Abreast and back to Line Ahead again before they found themselves broadside to broadside with their enemies. Without this movement the two parallel lines would never have met.

In the Galley epoch the Line Abreast was a distinctive battle formation: in the age of sails it was a subordinate and transient condition of the "Line".

a son of Lord Burlington. At that moment a chain-shot from the enemy brought swift death to the three nobles. The Duke was drenched with their blood, and received a wound in the hand from a fragment of one poor victim's skull. Pepys says, he was thrown to the deck by the severed head of Mr. Boyle. After this no one could dispute that His Grace knew the meaning of battle at sea. In the midst of the duel the *Kendracht* was blown into a thousand pieces. How it happened cannot be determined, but the destruction was so terribly complete that only five survivors were rescued from a ship that carried five hundred.

The loss of the Dutch flagship was not unnaturally ruinous to the Dutch cause. The unheroic put before the wind, and those of sterner mould were fain to follow. It is worthy of remark that Cornelius Tromp, worthy son of a great father, marked himself out for promotion by the skill with which he covered the retreat.

His ability contributed nobly to avert an overwhelming catastrophe, but not so much perhaps as events on board the English flagship. Here at the conclusion of the day a council of war was held at which it was unanimously agreed that the fight must be renewed upon the morrow. A decision being reached, and dispositions made so that the fleet should with all sail follow the light of the *Royal Charles*, the Duke sought the rest he had well deserved. During his interval of repose his Groom of the Bedchamber came on deck with an order to slacken sail. Had the message been delivered to Penn, he would no doubt have raised his gentle voice in protest; but Sir William was suffering from twinges of gout, and had turned in the first moment his services could be spared. The message was accordingly carried to John Harman, who had commanded the *Welcome* at Portland, and been with Blake at Santa Cruz. With grudging loyalty James's Flag Captain obeyed, and it was only when His Highness himself came on deck refreshed that his amazement revealed the truth. The order had come from an irresponsible person who had of course received instructions from the Duchess to bring her lord safe home again.

Regrettable as the incident was, there is good reason to believe that the Dutch were in any case able to escape. The leeward position was not only favourable to their departure, but if properly utilized would enable them to depart alone. If the "Windwards" had the power of attacking, they had, in the

moment of attack as they ran down upon the foe to endure the full offensive of the enemy without the power of reply. The whole area of their motive power was exposed to a raking fire which might render them incapable of rapid movement when the moment for pursuit presented itself. The "Windwards" had their remedy in so battering the enemy as to render them equally powerless to depart : but this was not easy if the enemy stood not upon the order of their going.

But if Lowestoft was not an epoch-making battle, if it failed to bring the war to an immediate close, it was at least a great and decisive victory. Eighteen ships were taken, fourteen more perhaps destroyed, 2,000 prisoners captured, and 4,000 Hollanders killed or wounded ; this, at a cost to the victors of 250 killed and less than 500 wounded. The Dutch let their indignation run riot. Four captains were shot. Four had their swords broken over their heads, and were cashiered. Even the gallant Evertzen was mobbed when he went ashore. Flung into the water he escaped with difficulty, and for the time at least left his country's service till those for whom he had fought learned to discriminate between the cravens and the brave.

Meanwhile brave Admiral Lawson was carried home to Greenwich suffering from a musket wound in the knee, which brought his fighting days to an end ere the month was out.

If the English failed to follow up their advantage on the field of battle they had little opportunity during the remainder of the year. In the early days of autumn the horrors of the Plague desolated the city of London. All who were lucky enough to escape before the rigorous prohibitions which confined men to the town, fled to the country. Death danced through the streets smiting whom he would, and the wretched fled before him shrieking. The markets were as void of human faces as the desert sands ; and the cheery prentice cries and the rumble of the chariot were replaced by the dirge-like chant "Bring forth your dead !" of those who brought the dead-cart to the red-cross doors. The King and the silken cavaliers were of course among the earliest to move, establishing a new Court in the salubrious air of Oxford. They were brave men indeed who had the power to get away, and of their free will stayed behind. Such, however, there were : Gilbert Sheldon, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and

by his side the Duke of Albemarle. The old warrior confessed that nothing in his recollection could compare with the sights he saw. The Dutch Wars, he said, were nothing to the Plague. But with the old unflinching courage he looked death boldly in the face. With means utterly inadequate he did his best to keep order and allay the distemper, daily ministering of his own substance to the needs of sick and dying.

THE FOUR DAYS' BATTLE

JUNE 1, 2, 3 and 4, 1666

With the return of spring, and the departure of the Plague, the mind of the Government reverted to the war. The first matter to be settled was the command. The peril which the Duke of York had encountered at Lowestoft made the King anxious for his safety, and the people profoundly disappointed with his Highness's achievement approved the monarch's show of tenderness.*

Lord Sandwich was the natural successor of the Duke of York, but after short employment he was relieved of his command, and appointed ambassador to Spain. Rumour set herself to suggest more than one motive for this unexpected turn, and the Earl's enemies found it difficult to decide whether he had been "sent into exile" for gross peculation or vulgar cowardice. The last insinuation was particularly unkind, as none fought better at Lowestoft. Mr. Pepys, whose panegyrics, even if inspired by gratitude, were not unworthily bestowed, found in Montagu's retirement a lasting grudge against fate. Unfortunately his partisanship invali-

* Sir William Penn, voluntarily sharing undeserved blame, retired with his royal master, and never again served his country on the sea. Henceforward his sphere of activity lay at the Admiralty where he did excellent work. His labours brought him into close contact with Mr. Pepys, who often dined with him, and heard him tell a good story or sing a good song. When, however, the Admiral took a high hand, his "comely round visage and fair hair" drove Mr. Secretary wild; and rushing home he wrote his superior down "a rogue," "a counterfeit rogue," "a cunning rogue," "a very cowardly rogue," "a mean rogue," "a hypocritical rogue," "a coward," "a coxcomb," and "a very villain," abuse which throws rather more light on Mr. Pepys' taste for vituperation than on the merits of his victim. Sir William died [1670] at the age of fifty, and was buried in St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. His son, the famous quaker and founder of Pennsylvania, kept his name green for years to come.

dates his judgment of all sea-fights in which the Earl had no part, and of all commanders who ventured to usurp his place.

With a certain sense of trepidation, Charles nerved himself to approach the Duke of Albemarle. His name was on every man's lips, and yet it was hardly fair to expect more from one who had already done so much. It would be pleasant to think that the old Duke welcomed the opportunity of returning to the sea; but he had a condition to impose. He begged that his appointment might be kept a secret from his wife, for if she "should come to know it, before he had by degrees prepared her for it, she would break out into such passions as would be very uneasy for him." Whether Mr. Pepys inadvertently let out the news cannot be said, but the Duchess found a weak point in his armour when next he dined with them, and "said these cursed words: 'If my Lord had been a coward he had gone to sea no more; it may be then he might have been excused, and made an ambassador.'" This unkind hit Lord Sandwich made the diarist "mad," and henceforth he wrote the Duke down a "blockhead," and the Duchess something worse.

With the Duke was associated the gallant Prince Rupert, and surely no grander couple could have been found for the work that lay before them. When it was known that Albemarle went forth with the ships, sailors came forward in crowds, because they were sure His Grace would see them properly fed and justly paid. With the lesson of Lowestoft before his eyes the old Admiral had hardly taken command when he issued an order of the highest importance. "If any flagship shall by any accident stay behind, all ships belonging to such flag are to make all the way possible to keep up and endeavour the utmost that may be *the destruction of the enemy, which is always to be made the chiefest care.* And if any flagship shall be disabled the flag officer shall remove himself into another ship and shall there command and wear his flag." Albemarle must for all time personify the application of militarism to naval science. In the previous war he had done his best to secure the adoption of the *Line*. His object had been to give a law of order to those who would appreciate it. The *Line* once adopted became a formidable weapon in the hand of an expert, but was never regarded by those who fashioned it as other than an engine of destruction. A man girt with a sword is in a better position for fighting than a

man without : but to one ignorant of its use a sword avails little, and may even serve at times to make its wearer look ridiculous. Monk had forged the weapon : Albemarle came forth to show his fellow-seamen how to wield it.

Not less enthusiastic than his enemies, John De Witt, President of the United Netherlands, and the ablest minister the Dutch ever had, determined to do his utmost to reverse the verdict of Lowestoft. The safe home return of De Ruyter augured well, but the Grand Pensionary resolved to go aboard himself. It was not that he thought to augment De Ruyter's chance of victory, though he knew all parts of a ship, and is credited with the invention of the chain-shot, but he imputed the late miscarriage to errors in conduct, and intended that the fighting line should have the eye of the Government upon it. Furthermore he endeavoured to stir Louis XIV to a proper sense of the responsibilities of alliance.

Louis of course was quite prepared for this, and instantly put on the busiest air of eager co-operation. With a campaign which deceived everybody he let it be known that he was hurrying to the assistance of his friends a powerful fleet of thirty ships.

Agitation seized the Court of St. James's. England was threatened from two sides, from the Channel and from the North Sea. Charles's advisers were insistent. There was of course but one thing possible. Rupert must be detached to deal with the French, while Albemarle looked after the Dutch. Had the English possessed two fleets each able to hold its own against the Dutch, the division of the forces might have been justified ; but with Rupert's squadron Albemarle could only muster about eighty ships to De Ruyter's hundred, and the departure of the Prince left him outnumbered by two to one. Those who know how Napoleon loved to cajole his opponents into dividing their strength, will appreciate the haste with which De Ruyter put to sea, and will understand why Louis rubbed his hands, especially when it is added that the news of his fleet was false, and that all his ships were safely bestowed far from the scene of action.

Nominally the Red and Blue Squadrons remained with Albemarle, who hoisted his flag in the *Royal Charles*. As his coadjutors in the Red he chose Sir Christopher Myngs [1625-1666], an East

Anglian of humble birth* who had snatched a reputation in the Jamaica campaign, and Sir Robert Holmes, of West African fame, who, like Myngs, had won a knighthood by the handling of his ship at Lowestoft. The Blue Squadron was commanded by a veteran of the First Dutch War, Sir George Ayscue, who had his flag in the *Royal Prince*. Serving under him were Sir William Berkeley and Sir John Harman. Prince Rupert in the *Royal James* prevailed with the Duke to part with Sir Christopher Myngs, whom he carried off as his second in command against the French.

THE FIRST DAY. JUNE 1

As De Ruyter in the *Seven Provinces* stood towards the Straits to effect a junction with his allies, the S.W. breeze stayed his course and he anchored not far from Dunkirk. Albemarle utilising the wind that had checked his adversary found the centre of the Dutch line to leeward of the rear, or left wing. His position might have justified a refusal of battle. Indeed it tempted him for engaging. But apart from his own spirit, which could hardly be expected to brook retreat, the wind was carrying him on the top of his foes.

In a moment he realized an advantage offered him, and with something of delight he flung the whole of his force on the Dutch left wing. [MAP. PHASE 1.] These, under the younger Tromp, cut their cables and the opposing fleets made shorewards on the starboard tack.

Albemarle doubtless hoped to annihilate one division of his enemy before the others could get into battle.† This excellent conception was frustrated by the choppy, lumpy state of the sea, which prevented the ships in the windward station from using their lower tier of guns. Albemarle had not done nearly all he desired when the sight of the coast reminded him that it was time to put about. The English therefore turned towards their own coast. This movement gave De Ruyter his opening, and having worked his way to windward he threw himself with his fresh ships on the latter half of the returning English line. [MAP. PHASE 2.]

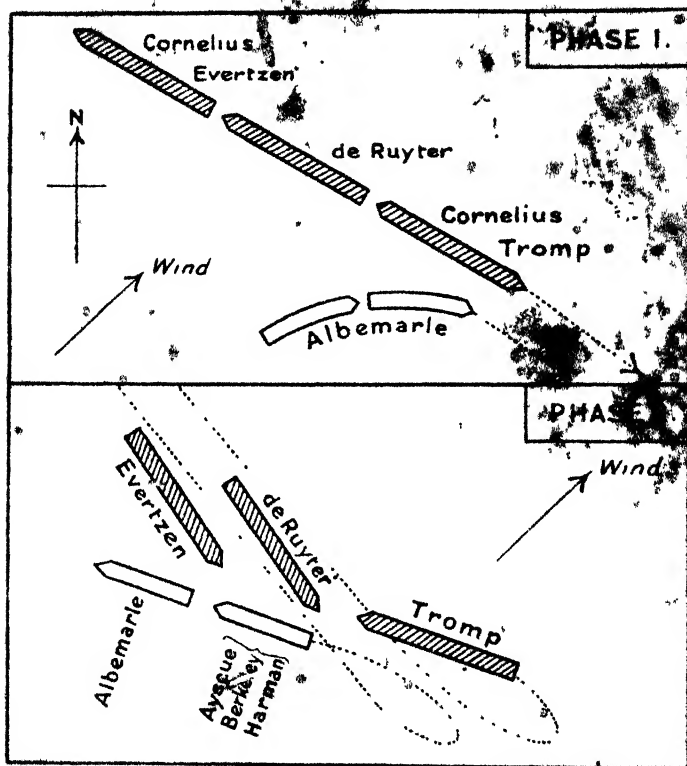
* Pepys says his father was a collier.

† "The merit of Monk's attack as a piece of grand tactics is evident, and bears a strong resemblance to that of Nelson at the Nile."—MAHAN.

ALBEMARLE

19

The hottest of the first day's fight lay here. The *Swiftsure* was surrounded and her deck converted to a shambles. With hardly a soul alive but himself Sir William Berkeley roared out a refusal to constant demands for surrender, until a bullet in the throat.



THE 'FOUR DAYS' BATTLE

First Day, June 1, 1666

[The figures represent groups of ships, not single vessels.]

choked him, and rushing to his cabin he flung himself on the table and died in agonies. The *Henry*, with the flag of Sir John

* No apology is thought necessary for the rectilinear appearance of this and subsequent battle-plans. They are put forward as aids to the imagination, not as epitomes of topographical exactitude.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

Harman, who had been the Duke of York's Flag Captain at Lowestoft, was grievously beset by fire-ships. The first approached, grappled the *Henry* with her hooks, and burst into flame. Lieut. Lanning got aboard the flaming vessel, liberated his own ship from the vicious claws of her devilish antagonist, and regained her deck unhurt. Just as a second brander appeared on the opposite quarter, the *Henry* was too much for the sorely tried company, and they made for the bulwarks to leap overboard. Harman drew his sword, rushed among them, and threatened to kill the first man who dared to desert his ship. Then by personal example he freed the *Henry* from her second enemy only to find himself engaged by a third. Again he rallied his crew, again delivered his ship; but a flaming topsail-yard broke his leg as he actively assisted in the work. By this time the persecuted ship was in the clutches of Cornelius Evertzen, and the Dutch Admiral raising his trumpet offered quarter to so gallant a foe. But Harman struggled with help to an erect attitude, and balancing himself on his one leg, returned answer that he had only just begun to fight, and with the next broadside killed Evertzen himself. In the confusion that followed, he slipped into safety; and reaching Harwich little better than a wreck, refitted in haste in order to return to the fight.

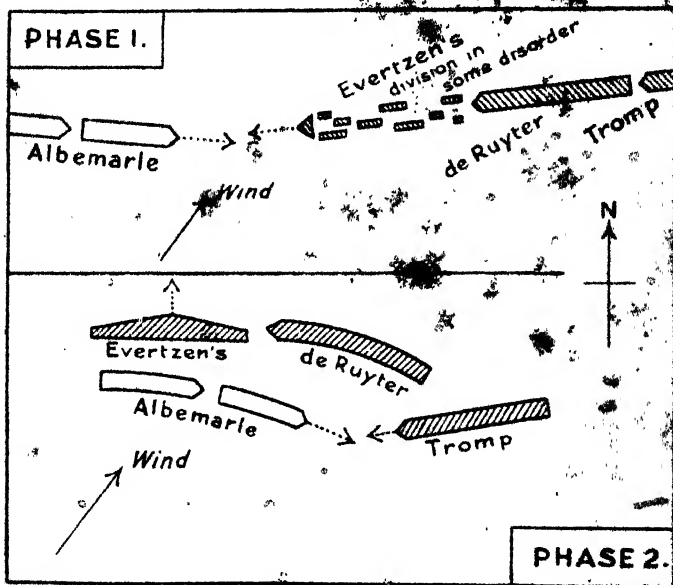
On a land battlefield a broken leg is, of course, an obvious disadvantage; on a quarter-deck things are different!

SECOND DAY. JUNE 2

Before the second day dawned the Dutch received a reinforcement of sixteen ships. Albemarle was now in a position of still more marked inferiority, but without the slightest hesitation he returned to the fight, and by skilful handling retained the weather-gauge. If De Ruyter had felt distressed at his inability to seize the fruits of victory promised by overwhelming numbers on the first day, the second must have proved even more mortifying. As the two fleets passed on opposite tacks cannonading one another [MAP. PHASE 1], the van and rear instead of acting in perfect accord with the centre, played each its own game. The van, having lost the services of Evertzen, were huddled together sheep-like, and sheep-like, were the more confused when Albermarle in excellent order poured his broadsides into them. Being hard-

pressed, they put before the wind and exposed themselves to a raking fire.

In the rear Tromp, ever anxious to distinguish himself, utilized Albemarle's pre-occupation and endeavoured to steal from him the weather-gauge.* [MAP. PHASE 3]. He had received no orders from De Ruyter, and the manoeuvre, though excellent in itself, isolated him owing to the misadventure in the van.



THE FOUR DAYS' BATTLE

Second Day, June 2, 1666

Had Albemarle again accepted battle, with good fortune he might have accomplished Tromp's destruction; but instead of engaging the Dutchman from to leeward, he fenced with him for

* Albemarle was quick to see the merit of Tromp's attack, and on his recommendation it was afterwards enacted that, when a British fleet [with the weather in hand] met a hostile force on the opposite tack, it should before engaging pass on until the van was alongside the enemy's rear, that is to say, until the opposing fleets were in length equal, and in position opposite. This accomplished the British ships could go about and fight according to custom.

the wind and won it. Those who blame his headlong impetuosity on the first day, can hardly blame his caution on this occasion. He managed to do considerable damage to Tromp, and the swiftness of his judgment was attested by the skill of De Ruyter to leeward, relieved the fugitives, and returning with a stitch of canvas yet, rescued the fire-eating Tromp from an unpleasant predicament.

Outnumbered by two to one the Duke had held his own for two whole days; but his masts and spars were wounded, and he lacked the stimulus of any great success. His fleet could do no more. He recognized the hopelessness of the struggle and stood reluctantly towards his own coast.

THIRD DAY. JUNE 3

On the third day Albemarle continued his retreat. Dividing his fleet into two forces, he sent the more severely wounded vessels on ahead, and drew up the remainder line abreast to protect them from the enemy. At the extremities of his line he set powerful ships to debaf the enemy from attempting a turning movement. So excellent was this disposition, so masterly this grim bull-dog retreat that De Ruyter was unable to harass the departing ships as they made their way north-westwards to the Gunfleet, and the Black Deep entrance to the Thames [see map, p. 32].

To the Duke all seemed to be going well; when, as the day wore on, a disaster happened. Sir George Ayscue's flagship, the *Royal Prince*, the finest ship in the fleet, and for the moment acting as sentinel at the northern end of the line, ran aground on the Galloper shoal. Tromp swooped upon her; and before a rescue could be effected, the flag came down. Overwhelmed by his enemies a British Admiral surrendered. Albemarle was furious. He expected the spirit of Harman to swell the breasts of all.

And now the cup of De Ruyter's joy seemed filled to overflowing; for out of the south arose the sails of a new squadron of hardly less than twenty-five. Was it at last the dilatory fleet of France? Against any foe in the world but Albemarle he would have achieved a triumph long before. Surely fate would relent, and enable him with reinforcements to put the finishing touch to his work. He strained his eyes to survey the newcomer: when suddenly from the English line arose cheer after cheer, wild huzzas

from throats dry-patched with the heat of protracted battle. The approaching fleet was Rupert's! Albemarle hauled, to the wind, and De Ruyter realizing the change in the situation ordered the *Royal Prince* to be burnt.

THE LAST DAY

The English had now every reasonable hope of arriving home in safety. They had fought a good fight against terrible odds. It was not to be expected that more could be done. So far, however, from dreaming of retirement the Commander-in-Chief rated Rupert soundly for his unwillingness to join in on the night of his arrival, and ordered a renewal of the fight at dawn. The Dutch had still nearly seventy ships: Rupert had twenty-five, he himself had twenty-five wrecks. To his mind the balance was redressed.

In his *Memoirs* the gay Duke of Buckingham, boon companion of the Merry Monarch, tells a story which lifts the curtain and reveals the stern old warrior on this the last day of the battle. He and another in the flagship discovered Albemarle loading a small pistol. Wondering what use such a firearm could possibly serve in such an affray, they enquired its purpose and found the Duke steadfast not on any account to be taken, "and therefore Savile and I in a laughing way, most mutinously resolved to throw him overboard in case we should ever find him going down to the powder-room".

It was as well to be prepared for the worst, but there is no reason to suppose that Albemarle was doing more than guarding against a misadventure similar to that which had visited Ayscue on the previous day. True, he no longer had the wind, but that to him was no insuperable difficulty. He had fought the great *Martin Tromp* from to leeward and brought the previous war to a close. On that occasion some of his ships had weathered the enemy's line and some had not. As a result the Dutch had been put between two fires with consequences disastrous to themselves. On the present occasion he doubtless hoped to repeat the performance. With admirable skill and fortitude the English fought their way through the Dutch line as one may interlace the fingers of one hand with those of the other. Rupert's division, led by Sir

Christopher Myngs in the *Victory*, were the first in action, and the rest of the fleet followed as they could. Unfortunately the manœuvre was not attended with the success that had previously distinguished it. The Dutch were not in single line ahead, but ranged parallel to their foes in a reduplicated order. The ships may have been symmetrically stationed by De Ruyter as a gardener arranges his fruit-trees—

* * * * *

or they may have been huddled together in disorder as the van had been on the second day. In any case, the event was the same. De Ruyter with the secondary line beat up into the wind as the English broke through the first; and Rupert and Albemarle found themselves in the very position in which they had hoped to put their adversaries, Dutch to larboard and Dutch to starboard. It is little short of miraculous that any ships survived to tell the tale. Albemarle, however, instead of repining seems to have welcomed a unique opportunity of using both broadsides of the entire fleet at the selfsame moment—this on the fourth day of a raging battle.

One commander whom England could ill afford to spare swelled the list of lost Flag Officers. Hotly engaged Sir Christopher Myngs received a musket bullet in his throat. Refusing to leave the deck, he compressed the wound with his fingers, and for more than half an hour ordered the fight until a second bullet put an end to his agony.*

* Mr. Pepys attended his funeral, and was curious to find that no one of note graced the obsequies of so brave a man: "And as I drove away, about a dozen able, lusty, proper men come to the coach side with tears in their eyes, and one of them spoke for the rest, 'We are here a dozen of us, that have long known and loved, and served our dead commander Sir Christopher Myngs, and have now done the last office of laying him in the ground. All we have is our lives; if you will be pleased to get H.R.H. to give us a fireship among us all, here are a dozen of us, out of all which choose you one to be commander, and the rest will serve him; and if possible, do that which shall show our memory of our dead commander and our revenge.'"

The English were not annihilated. On the contrary, they began to make some impression upon the ships to leeward of them. Their position enabled them to bring these latter to close action. De Ruyter was master of the situation, and when he realized the danger that threatened a part of his force he put before the wind, cut through the wounded English line, linked up his windward with his leeward ships, and sped away homewards well satisfied with the damage he had done.

Thus ended what must always be reckoned among the most famous sea-fights of all time, famous for the number of ships employed, famous for the reputation of the two commanders, famous above all for its duration and endurance.

There is no need at all to contend that the battle was drawn in order to save the credit of Albemarle. It should not be necessary to-day any more than it was in the times of Charles II. During the four days Albemarle accounted for seven ships of the enemy, and killed or wounded more than 2,500 of his foes. But his own casualty list was twice as long. More than 2,000 were prisoners in the States, and twenty good ships had passed to the enemy. Albemarle was defeated. But will England readily forget this fight, this splendid illustration of the gallantry of her sons! Utterly out-matched from first to last, England's great Soldier Sailor achieved nothing greater than the glory of this defeat. Even if all else of him were forgotten, this battle alone would offer incense to his name. Each day bore testimony to his bravery and resource, to his ready insight, his invulnerable gameness, and his power of inspiring men to die. When at the close of the fight the English sailors saw the great De Ruyter take his leave, halting perhaps upon his thigh, but erect of head and conscious of power; did they love their own commander less because he cursed the luck which prevented some of his ships from floating and all from making sail now that at last the enemy were on the run and himself was left the master paramount! There is such an admixture of humour and pathos in this attitude that it may be well to consult the Dutch interpretation of the scene. Did they exult? commiserate? or smile contemptuously? The Grand Pensionary, who witnessed the battle with his own eyes, did not attempt to conceal his astonishment. "If the English were beaten," he said, "their defeat did them more honour than all their former victories."

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

Englishmen may be killed, and English ship burned, but English courage is invincible."

The great battle is full of valuable lessons, but the fourth day has an importance all its own. The lesson taught did not escape attention. It was probably at the close of the campaign that Albemarle laid before the Admiralty the sum of his experience, and it was perhaps in conjunction with Penn that he formulated a definite rule for the conduct of a fleet desiring to attack from the leeward position. The new manœuvre, christened for short *Dividing the Enemy*, was intended to carry a portion of the fleet to windward of the foe with all the advantages of the *Line Ahead*, and without the confusion that had ruined the attack of 4th June. The van were exhorted to find a weak spot in their opponents' array, and finding it to tack through and bear down upon the ships cut off: the centre and rear, keeping their wind, to second the attack upon the part cut off or engage the ships that still held their position to windward. Faultless theoretically the stratagem was in practice exceedingly difficult. The possibility of confusion was not wholly removed from the aggressors; and the defenders, if their order was good, could always frustrate the artifice by beating to windward with an equal number of ships. "*Dividing the Enemy*" was, however, a notable contribution to naval science. At the least it revealed a perfect grasp of a difficult problem, and an attempt to solve it in a workmanlike way.

THE BATTLE OF ST. JAMES'S DAY

JULY 25, 1666

De Ruyter rode the sea in triumph after the Four Days' Battle and blockaded the Thames, where the shattered remnants of

*The Four Days' Battle is commemorated by Dryden in his poem *Annus Mirabilis* (The Wonderful Year 1666), and by the pictures of the younger Van de Velde, 1633-1707. The artist was the son of a sailor with a wonderful talent for drawing ships. After learning all his father could teach him, he obtained permission from the Grand Pensionary to accompany the fleet, and in many of his battle-pieces the legend *Mijn Gallijodt* proves his presence at the fight, and attests the value of the impression. The Van de Velde's were the first to render shipping with absolute fidelity. Full reliance must not be placed on pictures before their time. Both painters were eventually induced by Charles II to accept the position of Marine Painters to the Court of St. James's.

Albemarle's fleet had taken refuge. Mounting guard at the Gunfleet, he hoped that Louis XIV would come and render an invasion of England possible; but such action formed no part of Louis' plan. He did not desire to see the English overwhelmed any more than the Dutch. Without assistance De Ruyter could do little more than blockade; for Albemarle had still the nucleus of a fleet, and it was impossible to say how soon he would be ready. Perhaps no one was more surprised than De Ruyter when the old Duke put to sea again within fifty days of his defeat. But to say truth, every one from the King downwards made unparalleled exertions in the great emergency. Vague fears of Louis XIV added to the general anxiety, and even at midnight the dockyards were as busy as a hive of bees.

Albemarle had now a fleet of ninety ships; but he could not replace the brave hearts that were gone. Men with the skill of Lawson, and the courage of Harman and Myngs were not so easily found in Charles II's reign as in the strenuous days of the New Model. There were many new names among those who accompanied Prince Rupert and the Duke, this time together in the *Royal Charles*. But there was still Sir Robert Holmes; and Sir Edward Spragge must also be remembered. Knighted by the Duke of York after Lowestoft, he had in May gone shadow-chasing with Rupert. Returning he was raised to flagrank in the room of Sir William Berkeley, and by his fearless handling of the *Dreadnought* upon the last day of the four had won for himself the favourable regard of Albemarle.

The Battle of St. James's Day bears the same relation to the Second Dutch War as the Battle of Scheveningen to the First. It was decisive and might have been final. Both sides were bent on battle. Among the Dutch Cornelius Tromp thirsted to prove to all the world that the father's genius had descended on the son. He found himself in command of a splendid rear-division, and aspired to put even De Ruyter in the shade. But his valour, like that of Rupert's at Edgehill, outran his discretion. The English Blue Squadron which opposed him was the weakest of the three; and while stubbornly resisting, inch by inch gave way. Tromp pursued, and in so doing lost touch with De Ruyter and Jan Evertzen, who had forgotten his ill-treatment after Lowestoft in his desire to avenge his brother. These heroes fought as only they

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

could fight, but the English had equality of numbers, and every man in the fleet knew that the eyes of the country were upon him.

It is not to be supposed that all ships could boast the furious onslaught of the *Royal Charles*. In a short time she was too mauled to continue the action, and the Commanders had to shift their flag on board the *Royal James*. In the interval Holmes in the *Henry* threw himself into the gap; and the force of example and the thought of what was expected of them made the English irresistible. De Ruyter and Evertzen exposed themselves in vain. Evertzen died gloriously. But De Ruyter bore a charmed life. As the English redoubled their efforts, and he saw that some of his ships were flinching, he cried aloud in anguish, "Among so many thousands of bullets, is there not one for me!" Recognizing the hand of providence, he fought on until the English attack had discriminated between those that would fight to the death and those that would not; and then making sail he drew up his heroes so as to protect the runaways and brought the survivors off in good order of retreat. He had lost upon a fair estimate twenty ships, and 7,000 men: but he had lost them to Albemarle, and surely that were no shame.*

The English might have achieved a more perfect measure of success had they been opposed by a commander of less striking fortitude and less real skill. By his gallant resistance to the main attack De Ruyter left his foes in no position to cut off Tromp on his return. Thus he returned good for evil, as Tromp by his wild impetuosity had not only given a grand tactical advantage to his enemies, but had imperilled his very existence as a fleet. He paid dearly, for the States dismissed him from their service without compunction.†

Albemarle was now in complete command of the sea, and he patrolled the Dutch coast seeking for an opportunity of further inclining the mind of the enemy towards peace. In August the opportunity presented itself. He heard of a big fleet of Holland merchantmen, 160 strong. Attended for their protection by three battleships they had on their return home taken refuge in the

* The English lost one ship and some 300 men.

† Details of this battle are far to seek, but there is good reason to suppose that Albemarle again massed his strength on the hostile van. If he did so, Tromp's temerity would of course contribute materially to his success.

Vlie, the waterway that connects the North Sea and the Zuyder Zee between the Isles of Terschelling and Vlieland. * Albemarle was quickly off the Vlie; and stationing the main body outside the anchorage to prevent possible interruption, he chose a select little band under the leadership of Sir Robert Holmes, whom he instructed to overpower the hattleships at his extreme leisure and then let loose his fireships on the rest. When the turn of the merchantmen came, they were to be burned, not captured. Holmes acted up to the very letter of his instructions, and inflicted on the enemies of England a loss of goods and specie which a million pounds and more could not replace.

When the news of this exploit reached London, the citizens were still celebrating with fireworks the victory of St. James's Day. One hilarious versifier wrote:—

Our streets were thick with bonfires large and tall,
But Holmes' one bonfire made was worth them all.

The demon of fire was certainly abroad in 1665. Bishop Burnet avers that the sparks travelled from the Vlie to Pudding Lane, that the destruction of London was directly traceable to Dutchmen eager to avenge the outrages committed on their coasts. Certain it is that early in September London burst into flames, and men forgot the pestilence in the terrors of the Fire. Albemarle was at sea when he received from the King an insistent summons to return at once, for that none else could extinguish the flames or pacify the turbulence of the people.

The minds of both nations now inclined to peace. Apart from the misery arising from Plague and Fire, Charles found the actual experience of warfare strangely different from expectation. He had looked for a speedy triumph and a rapid increase of wealth. He found the reality long protracted and expensive. He had but one ambition in life, to enjoy his own now that he had won it. Unfortunately the ministers of enjoyment drew Charles into a thousand extravagances, and sucked his blood like leeches. For his comfort it was necessary that the war should cease because there were so many bills requiring payment; and if he postponed settling-day too long he might have to go on his travels again.

* See map, p. 47.

The Dutch heartily reciprocated his desire for peace; negotiations were opened, and a conference went into session at Breda (May, 1667). Charles made exorbitant demands which were in part warranted by his recent victories, but until terms could be arranged warlike operations continued.

Charles had drawn his own deduction from recent events, and though his reasoning was false, the need of economy blinded him. He attributed the destruction of the Dutchmen in the Vlie to the wrong person. His mistake was natural, for every one up-cried the name of Holmes. But the honour of the occasion belonged in chief to Albemarle. "Holmes's Bonfire" was a pendant to the Battle of St. James's Day. Such exploits are only practicable when there is a fleet in being to deal with would-be deliverers. The King missed this aspect of the question. He resolved to harass the enemy with unsupported raids: and laid up his ships, seventeen of them, including all the larger, at Chatham. Albemarle protested, Rupert expostulated; but to no purpose. The King was obstinate and overruled his counsellors. At least he learned a lesson that no English ruler is likely to forget. As if England could ever afford to do without her fleet!

Thousands of seamen, thrown out of employment, applied in vain for the pay they had earned, and, vowing revenge, entered the services of the national enemy. From their intelligence the Dutch President soon learned of Charles's wrongheadedness, and through their instrumentality he obtained valuable information regarding the navigation of English waters. Silently he laid his plans, and when all was ready he invited the co-operation of Louis XIV's soldiers.

ENGLAND'S HUMILIATION

JUNE 10, 11, 12, 13, 1667

In the first week of June, 1667, De Ruyter arrived off the Gunfleet with more than sixty sail of the line and thirty fireships. Dropping anchor in the King's Deep, he detached a smaller squadron with a few battleships, and nearly all the fire-vessels. This arrived at Gravesend on Monday, 10th June, but found the navigation of the Thames too intricate to make it possible to take London by surprise. De Ruyter therefore determined to content

himself with Chatham. Dropping down stream, the smaller force rejoined the main fleet at the Nore, and an immediate attack was made upon Sheerness. Meanwhile the news had reached London, and thrown the capital into a panic. The beacons were fired as in Armada days. Every one was in dismay. Reason took flight; and though no one knew what to do, every one knew that there were 100 Dutch ships in the river, and thousands of French troops waiting till some landing-place had been secured. "Help! help! for God, and the King, and kingdom's sake! . . . There is hardly anybody in the court but do look as if he cried." The courtiers fled, like children at the approach of a peril which has been foretold to incredulous ears.

The King, who had refused to listen to the views of Albemarle while there was time, now cast himself upon the old Duke's mercy. It was almost too late for anything to be done, but the Captain-General looked not at things in that light, and flung himself into the saddle without even feeling the temptation to reproach. It was well for England in that hour of need that she had at least one man.

Issuing orders for the concentration of artillery at Chatham, Albemarle collected all he could raise at the moment, and with the practised instinct of the born soldier rushed to Gravesend in order to stop the progress of De Ruyter up the Thames. In his capacity as Captain-General he had already arranged for the mobilization of the land forces, and had ordered a bridge of boats between Tilbury and Gravesend to facilitate concentration at the point of danger. He arrived at Gravesend on the evening of Monday, 10th June, shortly after the enemy's departure, and from the sound of firing in the distance guessed that the foe were forcing an entry into the Medway. The noise was the bombardment of Sheerness, and Albemarle knew that the fort could not hold out, as its bastions were unfinished and its ordnance unmounted. It held a brave heart, however. Sir Edward Boscawen, a turned soldier for the once, had found a warm corner as a lover, and like Horatius of old held his own against tremendous odds in the firm trust that those behind him were strengthening the means of defence. Sheerness was bound to fall, but with fifteen guns Spragge resisted for three hours against thirty ships of the line. Three hours delay was invaluable. Minutes were priceless with everything to be done.



CHANNELS LEADING FROM THE NORE TO THE OPEN SEA
 [During the period of the Dutch Wars the King's channel was often used in preference to the Nore
 Deep, the main entrance to the Thames]

On Tuesday morning Albemarle galloped into Chatham. He found the dockyard wholly disorganised, and practically deserted. Cool even at such a crisis he did all that could be done. The pride of England's battle-fleet, peacefully lying in the river, extended from Rochester to below Upnor Castle. Below Gillingham Albemarle mounted a great boom across the river, and below the boom he sunk five vessels in the channel to block the waterway. In this work he was assisted by Sir Edward Spragge who had pressed onwards from Sheerness. The Lord General next turned his attention to Upnor Castle; and with feverish haste threw up batteries at either end of the boom to enfilade those who attempted to pass through. When the Dutch approached he learned to his sorrow that the channel was incompletely blocked. Without a moment's hesitation he resolved in person to stand in the path of the invader. Between the boom and the *Royal Charles* he had drawn up three of the smaller battleships broadside on. In these he embarked his force to defy once more De Ruyter on the flood, and die in defence of the ship he loved. The youthful and chivalrous gallantry of the grand old Duke moved deeply the hearts of all beholders, and inspired anew the spirit of patriotism which had of late so sadly waned.

Happily England was spared the sacrifice. The sunken ships below the boom delayed De Ruyter, and the Duke hastened ashore to complete his preparations. He had done what man could do, with means inadequate, when on the following day De Ruyter found a waterway, and moved to the assault. He destroyed the batteries that flanked the boom, and sent a ship to break the barrier. The ship struck off the boom, and a second joined her. The weight of the two broke it down. The Dutch shrieked applause, and moved against the devoted battleships. Each in turn was taken and fired. Wilder and fiercer howls of triumph swelled; but when the roar of battle lulled, and the boom of guns subsided, the voices of Englishmen were heard from foreign decks chanting in derisive unison, "We have come to get our pay!"

To such an accompaniment the Dutchmen moved against the *Royal Charles*. This splendid ship, in which flew the flag of Blake in the war with Spain, in which Montagu had hoisted his flag when he brought the King home again, in which His Royal Highness had won his laurels at Lowestoft, in which the Duke

had done such wonders on those four successive days, the emblem of all that England honoured and all that she revered, submitted helplessly while alien hands hoisted aloft the flag that she had humbled, and carried her away to adorn a victor's triumph.

If a few tears forced themselves into the stern eyes of that hard old chieftain, and glistened there before he blinked them away, will men honour him the less!

On the last day of the agony De Ruyter picked his way higher up stream, and forced his way past Upnor Castle. Three first-rates were near at hand, *Royal Oak*, *Loyal London*, *Royal James*. De Ruyter meant to have them. Though the shallow waters could not hide their shame, Albemarle sank them at their moorings, and the Dutchmen were forced to burn what they could not move.

Now at last the artillery reinforcements began to arrive, and Albemarle to live again. Cane in hand he superintended the disposition of his pieces amid a perfect storm of shot. The imminence of his peril brought remonstrances from those about him. "If I had been afraid of bullets, I should have quitted this trade long ago," was all the notice he took. From Gillingham opposite Sir Edward Spragge returned an answering fire, and De Ruyter found that he could do little more in a confined space where nothing but the shallow draught of his ships made operations possible. He had done a world of damage, and his fireships were exhausted. As soon as the tide allowed, he dropped down stream: but for weeks he blockaded the river, prohibiting ingress to all British ships.

Chatham was saved and half the fleet. But where was England's honour, where was her prestige!

We all have sinned, and Thou hast laid us low
As humble earth from whence at first we came;
Like flying shades before the clouds we show,
And shrink like parchment in consuming flame.

O pass not, Lord, an absolute decree
Or bind Thy sentence unconditional,
But in Thy sentence our remorse foresee
And in that foresight this Thy doom recall.

Thy threatenings, Lord, as Thine Thou moves revoked
But if immutable and fixed they stand,
Continue still Thyself to give the stroke,
And let not foreign foes oppress Thy land.

JOHN DRYDEN (1681-1700)

Nothing is more strange in the Second Dutch War than the startling suddenness of its close. In June De Ruyter was in the Medway, in July the delegates at Breda affixed their signatures to a treaty of peace. The Navigation Act was amended in favour of the Dutch, and their preponderating influence in the East Indies acknowledged; but the West Indies were set down as a British sphere of influence, and the British occupation of Cape Coast Castle and New York was verbally confirmed.* The achievement of terms so satisfactory by a power degraded in the dust requires some explanation.

While the sea-powers fought, they had neglected the self-appointed umpire. So engrossed were they in the struggle that they stopped not to consider seriously the puzzling behaviour of the new sea-power that missed no movement in the game they played. When De Witt had planned his paralysing coup, he invited Louis XIV to take part in a scheme which promised the overthrow of their common enemy. The Grand Monarque yawned and expressed himself delighted with the prospect. There is no reason to disbelieve his profession. The Dutch had craved terms of peace, and from sheer exhaustion the English had laid up their fleet. This was the hour for which he had watched and waited. The time was ripe, and Louis went a-harvesting. For long he had feigned a total lack of interest. He had been ignored as he had wished, at times forgotten. Now he threw his hand upon the table, certain of his cards.

Poor distracted De Witt! As he received news that the *Royal Charles* was being ignominiously trailed across the North Sea, he was already face to face with a new and more deadly peril. The army of France which he had hoped to plant on England's shore was reducing the strongholds of the Spanish Netherlands. What opposition could the Spaniards offer to the soldiers of Martinet, the siege-works of Vauban, and the leadership of Turenne! If Louis carried his boundary to the Rhine, if France extended in unbroken range from the Pyrenees to Antwerp, what hope was left for the Dutch Republic, which had hardly endured with English help against the divided power of Spain!

* The British East India Co. hardly survived this war on the terms of its foundation. The Dutch monopoly drove the company to turn to the Peninsula, and the Indian Empire of to-day need not feel ashamed even if the Dutch are still in possession of the islands of India proper.

If the English were glad of peace in 1667, so also were the Dutch.

Albemarle did not long survive the disgrace that his country had suffered. His health had been already undermined by the strenuous exertions of a life which few are called upon to live, and the sad close of the campaign had a most detrimental effect upon his spirit. In retirement at Newhall, his country seat near Chelmsford, the change and rest did wonders. For a while he returned to the burden of his duties. But ere long he was once more prostrated by a return of his malady, and small hopes were entertained of his ultimate recovery.

He endured his sufferings with exemplary patience, and never failed to smile cheerily on all who visited him. The Archbishop, who had learned to love him in the days of pestilence, was frequently at his side, and the King tore himself away from his pleasures to visit his greatest subject. The poor old warrior was prevented by the nature of his sickness from lying down in bed, and to the last sat propped up with cushions in his chair. The winter of his illness was very severe, and the cold augmented his sufferings. If it would but yield, men said he still might rally. The end came very peacefully. Death stole on tiptoe into the room, and Albemarle welcomed him "like a Roman general and soldier, standing almost up in his chair, his chamber like a tent open and all his officers about him." The tears of his old retainers testified that with all his martial renown he combined other lovable qualities.

The great man was buried with pomp in the Abbey of Westminster, and all were anxious to erect to his memory a monument worthy of the loyal lion heart who had served so manfully his country and his King. Charles, however, claimed a son's right in the matter. He would at his own expense erect a memorial to the best father that ever man respected. Perhaps it is hardly necessary to add that he forgot to do so.

There is a story told of the old Duke in his latter days which brings his figure forcibly to view. His stringent temperance was a source of endless amusement to the cavaliers, who cared not whether it was white wine or red, so long as the night was merry. At times the Duke would lament the decay of manners, and then

his abstinence proved annoying. The lighter spirits won his piety affected, and lured him at last to an orgy. Every one drank heartily, nor did the old Duke flinch. He drank his wine like a man. They plied his cup and he drank again. The night wore on, and every chair was empty save one. Noting with relief the general subsidence the old man rose, shook himself, and with a snort of disgust, stalked off to a Privy Council meeting as sober as Rhadamanthus.

Never so happy as when working, Albemarle allowed himself "conference with a trustie friend in a spacious room" by way of relaxation. "He was of a very comly personage; his countenance very manly and majestick; the whole fabrick of his body very strong; his constitution very healthfull and fitted for business. He never was known to desire meat or drink till called to it, which was but once a day, and seldom drank but at his meal. He was of a great natural force: his eyes were a little deficient at a distance, but near hand were excellently usefull, being able to the last to read the worst hand-writing without spectacles. His ears were so quick that it was dangerous to whisper in the room without you would have him privy to your discourse. His judgment was slow but sure. He was very cogitative, and of a great natural prudence, and cunning in his own affairs. He was a person of great vertues, so wholly resolved to worthy actions, that he did not lye open to the ordinary temptations of mankind."

Thus his biographer and friend. Even Pepys, who had good reason to dislike the Duke, confesses to his *Diary*: "The Block-head Albemarle hath strange luck to be loved, though he be the heaviest man in the world, but stout and honest to his country."

ROOKE

BORN 1650—DIED 1709

I ask nae, Be ye Whig or Tory?
For Commonwealth or Right Divine?
Say, Dear to you is England's glory?
Then gie's a hand o' thine.

—OLD SONG

GEORGE ROOKE was born at Canterbury in the year after Charles I's execution, and was therefore still an infant when Cromwell brought the First Dutch War to a close in 1654. When he reached the age of fifteen the Second War broke out, and he resolved, like so many others, to serve as a volunteer. True he was still a boy; but to his serious sober nature the school of Albemarle must have made an extraordinary appeal. There is much that is common to both characters, the same honesty of purpose, the same faculty to do great deeds, the same forgetfulness to claim the smallest credit for them. But there is one conspicuous quality in Albemarle which remains latent in the soul of his successor. With all the makings of a hero Rooke eschewed the rôle. Had he been in Grenville's place at Flores he would undoubtedly have joined Lord Thomas Howard, not from any desire to avoid action but as a first step in the definite organization of success. There were occasions in his career when fate, too strong, forced him to play the more attractive part, but his delight lay in mastering a situation, and watching its development along the lines of his own ordaining. Does anyone suppose that Edward III preferred a station by the Crécy windmill because he feared to venture into the fray? As brave as the Plantagenet Rooke would make all essential dispositions down to the minutest detail; and then single out an aspirant to glory confident that the youth would win his spurs.

His preference for direction was fostered by a desire, not unlike for personal advertisement. There is no doubt, however, that it gave his rivals and political opponents occasion to slander his character and minimize his worth. If all that has been said in his dispraise were true, it would be a little difficult to understand how he drew attention to himself at Solebay and the Texel; how he distinguished himself at Bantry Bay and Beachy Head; how he brought relief to Londonderry; how he taught men to call the Battle of Barfleur, La Hogue; how he singed the King of Spain's beard at Vigo, how he captured Gibraltar for the Queen of the Sea; and stood at bay like a wounded deer in the fight off Malaga.

THE THIRD DUTCH WAR. 1672-74

In the hour of England's humiliation the Grand Pensionary had abandoned hostilities in order to give his whole attention to the new menace which threatened the very existence of his country. By his winning persuasiveness of speech he gained the good offices of Sweden, and at the beginning of 1668 set the crown on his career by inducing his late enemy to forget the bitterness of strife and join him in repelling the unscrupulous aggressions of France. The three powers compelled Louis to abandon his project and evacuate the territory of Spain. Louis was intensely mortified, but he recognized the futility of expostulation. He therefore struck a medal to celebrate his magnanimity in giving back what he ought never to have taken.

As a diplomatic achievement the Triple Alliance was dexterous and brilliant. But its benefits were fore-ordained to be transitory, not from any error in the passionless calculations of De Witt, but from the waywardness and frailty of human nature.

The Triple Alliance did nothing to convince Louis that his conduct had been wantonly aggressive. It served merely to transfer his mischievous activities into a new channel. With a consuming desire for revenge in his heart, he nurtured henceforward so malignant a hatred of the Dutch that plans for their destruction monopolized his thoughts. This would have mattered little if De Witt had felt secure in the sanctuary of his newly pledged friendship.

There was excellent reason for England's co-operation. The

conquest of the Netherlands would put France in possession of a wider sea-board and priceless havens. It would enable her to bestride the English Channel, carry her fleets by proprietary right through the Straits of Calais and knock insistently at London's water-gate. Here were motives that would have influenced Charles had he been guided solely by his country's interests: here were motives that should have ratified a lasting association with De Witt. But Charles was much wrought upon by "humours and opinions." He was too shrewd to allow Louis to make a cat's paw of him, but he had not forgotten or forgiven the Medway incident.

Thus it came to pass that before the Triple Alliance was two years old, Charles consented to perpetrate in conjunction with Louis what he had refused to allow Louis to perpetrate alone. By the Secret Treaty of Dover (1670) he agreed to take the side of Louis against the Dutch on condition that a British naval officer should command the allied fleets, and that on the conclusion of the war England should receive fortresses and islands that would give her the command of the Scheldt.

Englishmen may well be ashamed of this infamous contract. It is true that both the signatories had ground for annoyance: but without further provocation from the Provinces no self-respecting power could ventilate its grievance openly. Furthermore, neither contracting party was able to seek a quarrel and retaliate alone. Charles was in ill-odour with his Parliament. They were already enquiring with some heat into the misappropriation of funds during the late war, and were unlikely to make a more generous allowance in the event of renewal. The French King was kept in sober mood by the very existence of the confraternity. Charles was hampered by want of money, and Louis by England's plighted word. In the Secret Treaty of Dover Charles sold England's plighted word, and hired out the British Navy as a bravado sells his blade. To this day Englishmen may share Charles's desire for a final fling at the Dutch, but they cannot forgive the sale of England's honour for some paltry pieces of gold.

THE BATTLE OF SOLEBAY

May 28, 1672

The years 1572 and 1672 set side by side afford rather a striking contrast. On both occasions the Dutch were matched with a

formidable power; but in the days of Philip II they relied on the passive co-operation of England, in the days of Louis they were faced by her active hostility. The prospect was gloomy, but at least the "Beggars of the Sea" were nobly represented. Louis might bribe the princelings of the Rhine for temporary land-access to the enemy, but permanent possession of the Provinces turned on the control of the natural approach through the waters De Ruyter commanded.

It was the task of the great Dutch admiral to frustrate all attempts of his enemies to use the sea as a waterway to Holland. At the outset he hoped to prevent the union of their fleets, but the unpreparedness of his own Government rendered this impossible, and he reached the Straits only to find that the junction had already taken place. He therefore simulated flight; and the allies anchored at their extreme leisure in Solebay* roadstead, and proceeded to mature their plans.

The recent death of Albemarle had removed the one man in England who was really a match for De Ruyter. In his place the Duke of York reassumed the command which he had abandoned after Lowestoft. He was assisted in the command of the Red Squadron by Sir John Harman, who had fought so well in the Four Days' Battle, and by Sir Edward Spragge, who never missed a fight through fault of his own. At the conclusion of the Medway business he had conducted a smart campaign against the Barbary pirates, which for the completeness of its success challenges comparison with the work of Blake and Exmouth. On the present occasion he hoisted his flag in the *London*,† and numbered among his staff no more admiring disciple than Lieutenant George Rooke.

The Blue Squadron was commanded by Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, who like his chief had not met the Dutch since Lowestoft. He was now to prove that not in vain had he served an apprenticeship to Blake.

The White Squadron comprised the French ships, about thirty

* Now known as Southwold Bay.

† As the *Loyal London* this ship had been sunk in the Medway and partially destroyed by De Ruyter. She had been a gift from the Metropolis, and Charles hoped the citizens would subscribe to salvage and reconstruction. Disappointed in this, he paid the bill himself and knocked off the *Loyal* from the vessel's pride of name.

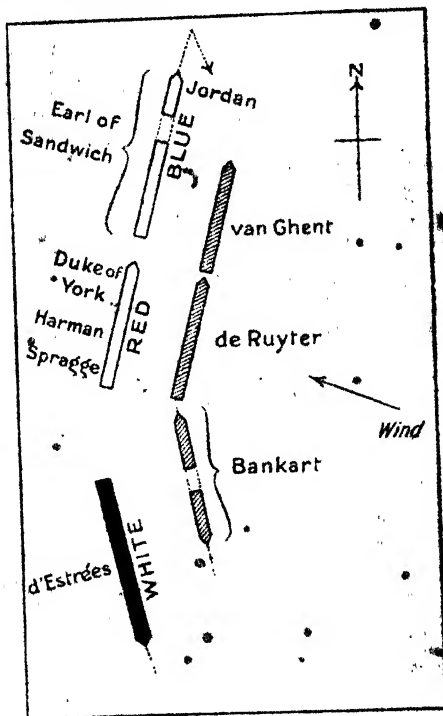
in number, and more than one-third of the entire force. Their commander was Jean d'Estrées [1624-1707]. Brought up as a soldier, he had distinguished himself in battle, and risen to the rank of General in Mazarin's war with Spain. Serving under him was the celebrated Abraham Duquesne [1610-88], an impetuous, hot-headed Huguenot, who had been bred to the sea from earliest youth, had learned the art of war in combat with Spaniards and Algerines, and according to his more enthusiastic biographers should be credited with the inspiration which made Colbert what he was. That Duquesne was the greatest French sailor of the age is indisputable: that he was dissatisfied with his position in the fleet falls very far short of the truth. He was boiling with rage.

Secure in the conviction that De Ruyter had run away from him James made no immediate effort to follow. Perhaps he plumed himself as he thought that the great seaman hardly dared to face the combined naval power of England and France. On 27th May Lord Sandwich approached him and pointed out that the wind was blowing from the wrong side of north, and that though there was no danger of their running aground, there was a strong presumption that De Ruyter would approach before the wind and catch them off their guard with none too much room to ply to sea. James replied very tactlessly, but evidently, in his own opinion, very wittily, that the Earl's susceptibilities were probably occasioned not by the demands of seamanship, but by the promptings of nervousness. The Earl returned to his ship concealing with difficulty a rankling annoyance and a strange disquietude.

On the next day De Ruyter, flying his flag in his beloved *Senear Provincies*, bore down before an easterly wind while the allies slumbered and slept.

The three divisions of the Anglo-French array were lying inshore; and looking seawards the Duke in the centre had the Blue squadron on his left, and the Frenchmen on his right. When battle was ordered at sea, the White had the honour of leading the van, the Commander-in-Chief with the Red occupied the best post for observation in the centre, and the Blue brought up the rear. This custom did not prohibit the Blue from engaging before the White if a sudden emergency, like the present, de-

manded it. Lord Sandwich saw the menace first, and in the general haste to get to sea was earliest away. With his flag in the *Royal James* he stood to sea northwards on the starboard tack, and found himself immediately engaged with the right wing of De Ruyter's force. The Red Squadron followed him.



THE BATTLE OF SOLEBAY

May 28, 1672

Unfortunately the White division did not act in concert with its partners. Perhaps D'Estrées was intent on his technical claim to lead the line; perhaps he acted from sheer ignorance which he regretted afterwards; perhaps, as Duquesne believed, he was actually running away. Whatever his reason he worked to sea on the

port tack; and every inch of water he covered, separated him ever more widely from the divisions of James and Montagu.

De Ruyter, who by reason of his vigilance alone deserved to win the battle, now gave a display of skill in itself sufficient to secure his fame. His fleet was inferior to that of the allies by ten ships at the least. But instead of allowing his left wing to engage the French, he detached a mere fragment to hold them; and reserved the remainder at his side. Then he delivered a furious onslaught upon the English centre whom he now equalled and perhaps outnumbered. Young Rooke in the *London* was witness to a fight of unparalleled importance, celebrated, and deservedly so, for the skill of the enemy and the dogged unflinching courage with which it was met.

The Blue squadron under Montagu was doing wonders. The Earl himself was bound for honour's sake to prove to all the world that the Duke of York's reckless gibe was as undeserved as it certainly was cruel. He had a splendid ship, and from earliest morning to midday he fought like a lion. His first antagonist, the *Groot Hollandia*, ran right under the *James's* bowsprit, and from her coign of vantage inflicted frightful carnage with a raking fire. Do what he could Sandwich could not get clear. Nothing but the turn of the tide or the loss of his bowsprit could deliver him. In this position he was attacked by Van Ghent, the leader of the Dutchmen's right, who brought another great ship to second his endeavours. From behind a veil of smoke they launched two fireships at him. Sandwich slew Van Ghent, fended off one fireship, sank the other with his broadsides, and carried the *Groot Hollandia* by boarding. He still had two antagonists. Grieved for the loss of Van Ghent they fought well, and sent another fireship down upon him. Sandwich disposed of her too, but the *Royal James* was exhausted. Her deck was blood-soaked, and the débris hung about her shrouds. Up aloft the tattered flag still flew. If no salvation came the *Royal James* knew how to die. Pitilessly her *toes* sent down another fireship, and then the end came quickly. Before anything could be done the vessel was in flames. Those about the Earl besought him to save himself, but he refused to abandon his ship while a shadow of hope remained. He stood there to the end, and when the ship blazed red from stem to stern, he dropped overboard and perished in the waters.

Those in rear of Montagu did their best to help him: but were themselves hard-pressed. The Earl would still have been rescued if his vanward had come to his relief. They, however, were otherwise engaged. The smallness of De Ruyter's force and his grand attack on the English centre left his right wing weaker than the opposing Blues. The foremost ships of Montagu's division under Sir Joseph Jordan, seeking antagonists and finding none, tacked, and gaining the wind doubled at first upon their adversaries' right. Continuing upon the new course they were in time enabled to bring assistance to the Red division, although by doing so they sacrificed unwittingly the Commander of their own.

The centre needed them. Here De Ruyter was surpassing the brilliance of his dispositions by the vigour of his personal prowess. Singling out the Duke of York's ship, the *Prince*, he subjected her to a cannonade which no vessel afloat could stand. James, fated to meet a right royal welcome whenever he fought at sea, endured with exemplary fortitude, but the *Prince* was put out of action and he abandoned her for the *St. Michael* and the stalwart arm of Sir Robert Holmes.*

The fight grew fast and furious all along the line. The English played a losing game as they alone can play it. Eight captains fell at their post; and the soldiers on board, here for the first time referred to as "Marines," received a tribute of universal commendation. Ere long the Duke had again to shift his flag, and this time came aboard the *London* where it is certain young Rooke eyed him with eager interest.

At last the terrible grip relaxed and the English realized that the trial of strength was over. The honour of the Navy was vindicated. The union flag still fluttered in the breeze.

De Ruyter had not done all that he desired. But though no captive ships were carried in triumph to Holland, the battle had been a costly one for the English. If their ships had not been as stout as their hearts, the defection of their ally must have ruined them.

* Sir Robert had been selected to inaugurate the Third Dutch War, he had the Second. In flagrant violation of international morality he attacked the home-returning merchantmen of Holland in a time of profound peace. The insult was sufficient; but Charles was bitterly disappointed at Holmes's failure to capture those he had attacked. Sir Robert was consequently under a cloud, and did not hold flag-rank in this battle.

Although the allies were not annihilated at Solebay, they were at the least crippled, and their attempt to command the water-road to Holland was for a time baffled and upset.

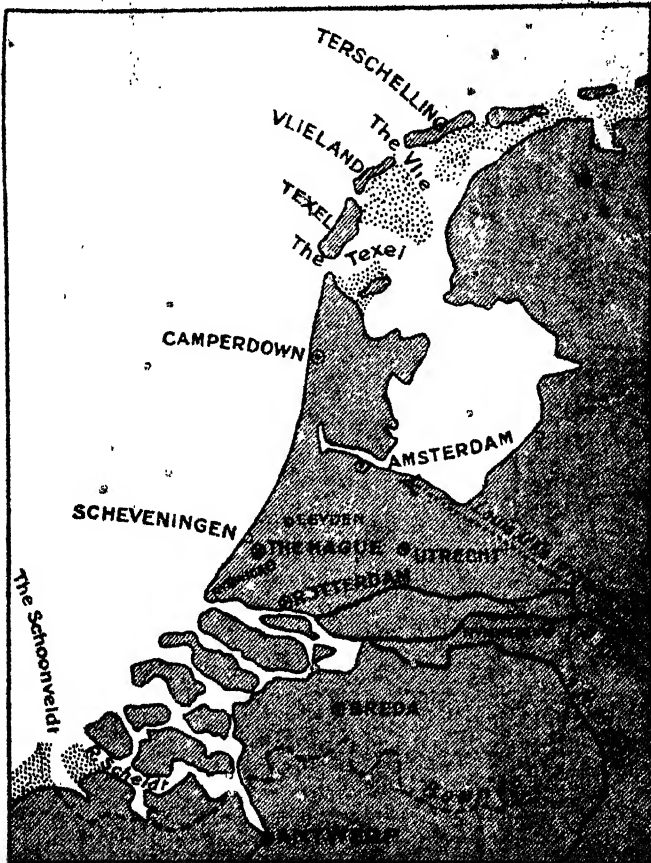
A few days after Solebay Louis XIV's army achieved an astonishing success. Between Paris and Amsterdam there are impediments enough for three campaigns, but in a few short weeks Turenne had swept them aside, and for one brief hour it seemed that the war would end, ere it had well begun. Fortunately for the States, Louis accompanied his arms in person; and his hesitation upon their threshold gave his enemies a momentary breathing-space in which to improvise defence.

This was the crisis in the life of De Witt. For twenty years he had ruled the States through good report and ill. Circumstances had forced him to develop naval power; and although in so doing he had starved the military strength, it is difficult to blame him. Even if the English wars had not absorbed his revenues, the revival of the army would only have served to remind the dissatisfied of the old régime and the Stadtholders. But now with Turenne at the gate Holland required the soldiers of Maurice as well as the ships of De Ruyter. De Witt was almost at the end of his resources. He looked around for allies, fenced with Louis regarding terms, and prepared to cut the dykes. For himself it was too late. The cruel hate of the unthinking mob hounded him to his doom. He was barbarously murdered in the streets of The Hague together with his brother Cornelius. The third William of the House of Nassau was set in his room at the head of the State, and brought to his task a genius equal to De Witt's and an individuality that bred a devotion never offered to the late Grand Pensionary. Among his first actions he recalled Cornelius Tromp, composed the difference which had kept him from the fleet since the fatal action of St. James's Day, and tactfully extorted from the headstrong leader a promise to act in strict accord with the direction of De Ruyter. Meanwhile the inundations ordered by De Witt left the towns standing like islands in the flood; and the success of this defensive measure was attributed to William and increased his popularity. Only when he found himself compelled to apply to the Admiral for sufficient powder to continue the struggle

ROOKE

ashore did the Stadtholder realise the extremity to which his country was reduced.

While Holland was in the throes of dissolution, England, torn asunder by religious strife, was so little ready to continue the struggle



THE UNITED PROVINCES

that De Ruyter might have paid a second visit to Chatham, had he not been acting in concert with the military forces. Instructed by

William to prevent the English from landing reinforcements for Louis, and otherwise to maintain a defensive attitude, he chose as his base the Schoonveldt, a sand-protected roadstead at the mouth of the Scheldt.

Among other enormities in the Secret Treaty, Charles had engaged to avow himself a Romanist. The actual declaration was postponed. But his religious tendencies had already set the Commons in a ferment, and now gave rise to a Test Act which debarred from service under the Crown all who were unwilling to dissociate themselves from the rites of the Church of Rome.* This deprived the fleet of Sir Robert Holmes, and the Duke of York who had already forsworn the religion of his father. The command of the fleet was accordingly transferred to Prince Rupert, whose exalted rank enabled the French gracefully to accept their subordinate position.

Harman the dauntless followed the Prince, and Sir Edward Spragge found his deserts in the command of the Blue division.

So long as the allies attempted to draw him from "his hole," De Ruyter was for the most part content to disappoint them. But when the wind put a chance in his way he was ready to leap at it, and provide his visitors with just sufficient reason for seeking friendlier waters. Then making judicious use of the shallows he would end the encounter. Twice in the early summer of 1673† he sallied forth and twice declined to push things to extremity. Methods so dilatory puzzled and irritated Rupert. He thirsted to inflict a crushing and final defeat upon the Hollanders. Lest the French should befool their friends as they had done in the great encounter of Solebay, he insisted that D'Estrées' division should be sandwiched between the English Red and Blue. This arrangement proved entirely acceptable to the Dutch, who made a dead set at the imprisoned objects of their special hate. It is only fair to the French to add that they fought well in a position where escape was impossible.

For another reason these skirmishes are memorable. Spragge and Cornelius Tromp found in each other the adversary that each

* March, 1673.

† First battle of the Schoonveldt, May 28 (anniversary of Solebay).

Second battle of the Schoonveldt, June 4.

ROOKE

had been seeking all his life. On 28th May Tromp opened battle in the *Golden Lion*. After fighting Sir Edward for seven hours he shifted his flag to the *Prince on Horseback*. Later he left the *Prince on Horseback* for the *Amsterdam*, and ended up the day in the *Comet Star*.

After a night's rest he wrote the following :—

DEAR MASTER,

Yesterday we went into the dance and God be praised, we are sound, and have enjoyed ourselves like kings. I am in my fourth ship, the *Comet Star*, and mean to have a fine dance to-day. We make the French run, so that they have to set sky-scrapers and everything else; and if things go on to-day as before, I trust that our prayer and that of all our friends will be heard and that we shall be freed from tyranny. Adieu. Courage. Things are bound to go well.

CORNELIUS.

There was of necessity nothing decisive in these bouts; and after the second, the allies [as De Ruyter had anticipated] were obliged to put back to England for repairs. King Charles came down to visit the fleet and listened with interest to all the news. He congratulated Spragge whose name was in everybody's mouth, and that doughty hero gave him a promise that in the next counter he would take Tromp or perish in the attempt. Much of course was said about the difficulty of inducing De Ruyter to issue out of his hole, and the King himself suggested a lure. There were 15,000 men in the eastern counties awaiting De Ruyter's defeat. The Dutch intelligence department was good. Let transports be collected; and let it be noised abroad that, as the Dutch were too nervous to put to sea, the army of invasion would at once be carried over to Holland.

THE BATTLE OF THE TEXEL

AUGUST 11, 1673

In accordance with this plot Rupert and his fleet set out again, and disdainfully ignoring the Schoonveldt, made along the coast as if to find a landing-place. William tirelessly followed them along the shore. The royal device was working well.

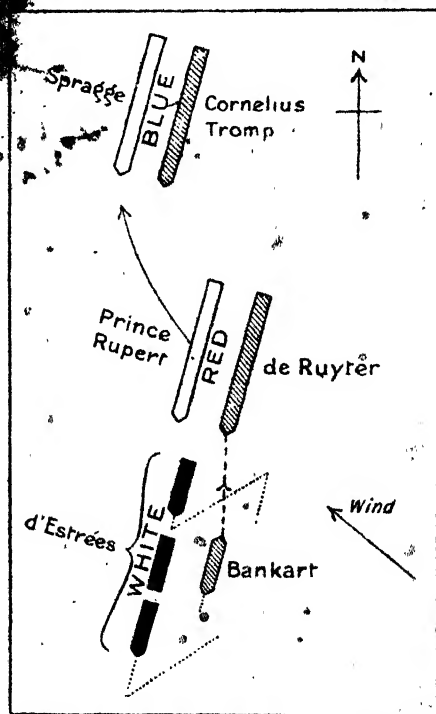
During the second week in August Rupert, who had met rough weather, was as far north as Terschelling, and De Ruyter, with his

flag in the *Seven Provinces*, and a fleet infected with new enthusiasm by a recent visit from the Stadtholder, panted up behind, and slipped into the Texel for repairs.

Off the anchorage on 11th August, 1673, the last battle of the long Dutch wars was fought. With the wind at S.E. Rupert sailing southward on the port tack, accepted battle to leeward. He himself commanded the Red Squadron and Spragge the Blue, while in recognition of their recent services the French resumed their place in the van. De Ruyter repeated in a more deliberate way the ruse which he had employed in the previous year. He had but sixty ships to thirty of the French and fifty of the English, but he detached a mere fragment to hold the French in check, and massed his strength on the allied centre and rear. D'Estrées did apparently make some effort to deal with the puny force opposed to him. He had the leeward position, but he endeavoured to push ahead his leading ships under pressure of sail and double to windward as Jordan had done at Solebay. He endeavoured also to divide the enemies' fleet after the English fashion by tackling through the gap between the Dutch van and De Ruyter's division behind. But the French efforts were similar to those of two clumsy greyhounds pursuing a swift little hare. Bankart, the Dutch commander, eluded his pursuers as long as it was possible to do so, and at the last went about and joined his force to De Ruyter's thereby swelling the opposition that Rupert had to face. The two greyhounds, much distressed at this occurrence, lay gasping with tongues extended. If their instinct suggested a return to the fight, their instinct went unheeded.

In the rear Spragge, mindful of his promise to the King, hove to in order to await attack instead of standing to the south with the rest of the line. Both he and Tromp surpassed themselves and "enjoyed themselves like kings"; but they drifted rapidly to leeward and lost touch with the battle proper. Spragge was nobly backed by Captain Arthur Herbert in the *Cambridge* and Captain Edward Russell in the *Phoenix*, but Tromp was also partnered with paladins and neither side would yield. As before, the principals used their ships as the fencer treats his foils, discarding the worn-out weapon for a better. As Tromp transferred his flag from the *Golden Lion* to the *Comet Star*, Spragge abandoned the *Royal Prince* for the *St. George*. The *Royal Prince*

was dangerously wounded, and Tromp made haste to take her in the *Comet Star*. To save his deserted ship Spragge dashed forward with *St. George* for Merry England. But the gunnery of the *St. George* pleased him not, and he ordered his barge to be manned and his self conveyed to the *Royal Charles*. The barge had



THE BATTLE OF THE TEXEL

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hardly started when a cannon-shot swamped it, and all the crew were thrown into the water. Sir Edward could not swim; but his bos'n and another kept him afloat. Unfortunately his long fight had exhausted him, and before a kindly boat could reach him he

was drowned. Cornelius was still at liberty, but Spragge had paid his ransom.

Tromp was so resolute to take the *Royal Prince*. Backed by more than one helper he hurled himself at her. But though the English ship was unmanageable she was still ready to fight. No longer able to pick and choose her foes she nailed her colours to the mast and double-shotted her guns. Tromp was persistent. If he could not bring her flag down, he would burn her, and she should die the death of Montagu's *Royal James*. He procured two fireships. But the *Royal Prince*, helpless though she was, fended them off and waited for more.

Spragge's name was very dear to Englishmen. It proved that the motherland still bore brave hearts like Richard Grenville's. At the same time it is possible to understand the annoyance that Rupert was feeling. In his land campaigns he must have learned how fatal it is for one in high command to allow his joy of battle to master his generalship. Outnumbered himself Rupert found himself isolated. Once again he fought as he had done under the approving eye of Albemarle, but it was only to extricate himself from the meshes of De Ruyter. This done, he took the one course open to him: he ran to leeward to link his Red ship with the Blue. De Ruyter followed and joined in the struggle which still raged round Sir Edward's flagship.

The *Royal Prince* had not yet finished. She was only a wreck now, but she saw that others were intent to save her; and so in death she lived, and living was rescued and carried into safety.

Little wonder if all men asked what man had defended the disabled ship with an arm so stout and a courage so tenacious. Little wonder if from this moment the name of Lieutenant Rook became a household word.

The rescue of the *Royal Prince* proved the turning-point in the fray. By this time evening was falling, and the French began to grow inquisitive. Accordingly they ran down before the wind as they might have done at any moment before, and once more put

"It was the ruin of Spragge . . . taking his flag in his boat, which gave the enemy an opportunity to discover his motion, when at the same time we saw flags flying on board the main to-mast-head of three ships which Tromp had omitted."

ROOKE

the much-ventured Prince in a position of numerical superiority. De Ruyter accordingly withdrew, and the battle ended much as Solebay had done. The English fighting under disadvantages which might well have been avoided, poured out their blood like water and lost not a single ship. But the glory of the day was De Ruyter's. His watchfulness had once more saved his country from invasion, and his skill in battle, brilliant and unsurpassed, had enabled him to incapacitate the joint fleet of two first-class powers with a force of marked inferiority.

The behaviour of the French in this last battle exasperated the people of England to a degree that rendered a continuance of the partnership impossible. It is reported that a certain Dutch sailor on being questioned as to the conduct of the French at Solebay and the Texel replied: "Oh, you see, the French have paid the English to do this part of their work, and they are merely here to see that they earn their wages." This was the view of patriots in England. The British Navy was the hired menial of the tyrant at Versailles! English sailors certainly would infinitely have preferred to fight against the French in company with that tremendous fellow Cornelius, and De Ruyter the perfect seaman.

Even without this revulsion of feeling it is doubtful whether Charles could have continued longer in the war. If Louis' invasion of Netherlandish Spain had in 1667 excited the indignation of De Witt, his unprovoked aggression against long-suffering Holland roused the fury of Europe to choking-point. The greedy rapacity of such an unprincipled land-grabber brought into the field a powerful alliance which by 1674 included the Emperor, the "Great Elector" of Brandenburg, the King of Spain, the Duke of Lorraine and the Count of the Palatinate. The political horizon became quite overcast, and the King of England in his graceful way bowed before the storm.

Louis XIV felt in no position to cope single-handed with the naval power of Holland. His ships had passed very easily through a strenuous campaign, but their shyness had one obvious disadvantage. They had acquired no first-hand experience. They had been initiated into the mysteries of naval warfare, but they had still to make a name. Louis resolved to give them the practice they required in a field where defeat was not so certain as in the land

seas. He revived Mazarin's scheme of attacking Spain in her Neapolitan possessions.

The French fleet was perfectly found and excellently equipped. The officers were burning with zeal, and anxious to reverse the verdict which the world had passed on their futile exhibitions in the North Sea. They quickly convinced the Spaniards that the warfare was going to be one-sided, and the Spaniards invited the Dutch to come and rescue them. The Stadtholder had already reversed the policy of De Witt, and was spending on land defence what had formerly been dowered on the fleet. He consented, however, to operate against Louis in the Mediterranean, and sent De Ruyter with a baby fleet of twenty ships.

In January, 1676, Abraham Duquesne * was bringing from Toulon an expeditionary force to the relief of a French army in occupation of Messina. De Ruyter, ignorant of Duquesne's numbers, flung himself between Messina and relief, and in the Battle of Stromboli enhanced his reputation by the skill with which he prevented a superior force with the advantage of the wind from getting past him. At the same time it was acknowledged that Duquesne handled his fleet admirably. To have stood up to the great De Ruyter without suffering annihilation almost entitles him to victor's laurels.

A second battle at Agosta followed. De Ruyter, who had fought through one deadly encounter after another without a scratch now received a mortal wound. He was carried ashore and died at Syracuse in the seventieth year of his age. The world has been accustomed to regard William III as the saviour of Holland. He would have been helpless without the victories of De Ruyter, who should be honoured as one of the founders of Dutch liberty as well as one of the greatest exponents of the science of battle by sea. His death gave the efforts of the French a keener incitement.* With martial impulsiveness they attacked the Dutch and Spaniards off Palermo, and inflicted upon them a crushing irremediable defeat [May, 1676].

The advent of a British fleet upon the scene in the following year robbed the French campaign of its material reward. But the

* After Solebay the cantankerous Abraham had accused his superior of cowardice. D'Estrées was honourably acquitted and Duquesne temporarily relieved of his command.

importance of these battles lay in their moral effect. They reflected the same lustre on the French Navy as Lepanto had done upon the Spanish. Henceforward England could not despise those who had departed from Solebay. They had put their principles into practice. They had beaten the allied powers of Spain and Holland. They had fought with distinction against the greatest seaman of the age. Duquesne did not survive to match himself with Rooke, but his task was done. He had founded a school. "Votre exemple," said the Grand Monarque, as he conferred on him a marquisate, "continuera de guider vos successeurs, et ainsi vous ne cesserez point de commander mes flottes."

Meanwhile the war upon the continent dragged its slow length along. The coalition of the European powers made the ultimate failure of Louis inevitable, but he did not abandon hope till Turenne met his death and Condé grew weary of battles. The new Stadtholder constituted himself the soul of resistance to France. He left no stone unturned to win deliverance for his country, and a growing party in England laid at his feet a tribute of admiration. As long as he dared, Charles turned a deaf ear to the anti-Gallicans, and an open hand to Louis' dividends. But in the year after De Ruyter's death, the marriage of Princess Mary of England with her cousin William of Orange apprised the Grand Monarque that "his Pensioner" could no longer hold his subjects in leash. This gentle hint turned the scale and in 1678 a general treaty of peace was signed in the States at Nymwegen. Louis obtained certain concessions chiefly at the expense of Spain, but they were quite inadequate to compensate his country for all that she had suffered in fighting the world companionless. Of Dutch territory Louis obtained not an inch. The future depended on the adolescent navy of France, for the two great powers of the sea had neither slain each other nor yielded to his armies or his gold.

Following the Peace of Nymwegen came ten years of profound peace during which England was occupied with an attempt on the part of the Whigs to exclude the Romanist Duke of York from succession to the throne. Charles championed his brother's cause, and demolished the opposition when he brought Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney to the block. The death of Russell raised up against the House of Stuart a formidable antagonist in

SEA-KINGS OF BRITAIN

Edward (1655-1727) brother-in-law and cousin of the "Patriot," a young naval officer who had served with distinction at the Texel. To honest, steady and unquestioned bravery he added an unscrupulousness which repels sympathy and a self-seeking greed which is the hero in him. He plays an important part in the story of the Navy and of Rooke.

In these years of peace Rooke fortunately found himself in a corner of comparative activity. The Navy was still kept upon a footing in the Mediterranean. The Barbary Corsairs, forgotten of their chastisement by Blake, continued to fill their coffers from the pillage of Levantine merchantmen; and if Charles overlooked the interest of others, he had a prize of his own to guard. His marriage with Catherine of Portugal had brought Tangier to the Crown. Expeditions defensive of Tangier, and punitive against the Algerines were incessant throughout the reign, and waited not on affairs more strictly European.* The Second Dutch War had recalled Lawson home to receive his death-wound at Lowestoft; after Chatham Spragge had replaced him. When the Treaty of Westminster closed the Third Dutch War a fresh expedition was fitted out under Sir John Narbrough, who had acquired some fame in a voyage of exploration to the Southern Sea, and as Flag-Captain to the Duke of York at the Battle of Solebay had won a knighthood for his services. When Narbrough was recalled his place was taken by one who under happier stars might have gained for himself the meed of fame that the fates reserved for Rooke. Arthur Herbert [1647-1716] came of a celebrated family. The illustrious author of *The Temple* was his cousin. The Admiral himself was brave as a lion. He was, like Rooke, a disciple of Spragge. He had fought at St. James's Day. He had carried the *Dreadnought* into the thick of the fight on the day that Sandwich fell. He had lost an eye against the Algerines. He was a skilful seaman and a clever commander. But he was a true son of a decadent age. He saw nothing in Charles II to dismay a man of honour. He made it his business to emulate the prince of luxury, and debased his more sterling virtues by a mercenary spirit.

* These expeditions were repeated throughout the eighteenth century. Exmouth's bombardment of 1816 was but a chapter in a serial which did not close till the French occupation of Algiers in 1830.

ROOKE

Rooke, who had won for himself the command of a ship in the plucky defence of the *Royal Prince* at the Battle of the Medusa, served in the Mediterranean under Nassbrough and Herbert, gained experience; he won a lifelong friend; he had become accustomed to the sight of Gibraltar Rock.

Apart from the Mediterranean contingent, the Navy fell into a lamentable state of decay. The King made no secret of the fact that he was spending the national revenues on illicit pleasures. The ships that had once defied De Ruyter rotted at their anchor. The limbs of the service became paralysed, its members atrophied. In 1683 Tangier was abandoned, and in the last year of Charles II's reign the British Navy had practically ceased to exist.

With the accession of James II everything was changed. As a sailor the last Stuart King has undoubted claims to his country's gratitude. No English monarch, not Edward III himself, acted a nobler part upon the sea. In the carnage which deluged his quarter-deck at Lowestoft, in the confusion consequent on the French defection at Solebay, James showed himself a man and a hero, and fought in a way that Englishmen have always loved. Nor does the debt end here. From the Restoration to the passing of the Test Act he filled with credit the office of Lord High Admiral. He codified the laws of the fleet. He reorganized her government. He re-edited her Fighting Instructions. Above all, he gave her a regular staff of officers.

The peculiar circumstances of Elizabethan times created a body of adventurers willing enough to put their swords at the service of Her Majesty whenever she required them. In the age of Blake the Council of State and Cromwell drafted well-seasoned warriors from the New Model when occasion arose. The age of gold was past, and the ironside ranks were thin when Charles came to his own again. The King accepted the services of Sandwich, Penn and Lawson, remarking with a laugh that those who had had the plague were immune from infection. He was thinking of disloyalty. That, however, was not the difficulty. It was James who recognized the need of properly trained officers. He busied himself with the problem, found its solution, and evolved the *Midshipman*. The term was no new one. The midshipman had been a boatswain's subordinate for years past. James introduced a letter from

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

the King to the captain of a ship requesting him to take a certain young gentleman aboard with him in lieu of one of his midshipmen. For long the young gentleman was known as a *King's Letter Boy*, but at length usurped the title of the petty officer whose place he filled. The young gentleman was obliged to prove himself a true seaman before he won a lieutenantcy, or he might be cut out by the *Tarpaulins* who rose from the ranks; but seven years' apprenticeship did wonders, and birth, breeding and influence turned the scale when the time for selection arrived.

James's work was interrupted by the Test Act, but on his brother's death (1685) he returned to a labour of love. In the first portrait painted after his accession, the King stands proudly on the sea-shore with some of his finest vessels floating in the middle distance. The crown is thrust aside with unbecoming carelessness upon a side-table. Sir Godfrey Kneller did not intend an allegory, but the allegory is there.

James called to his side the invaluable Mr. Pepys,* and with his help restored the service to the same efficiency which had characterized the epoch of the First Dutch War. He could not foresee that the fleet revived would enable England to deliver herself from the monarch, whose fostering care had recreated it.

As a king, James was a sorry failure. He was wholly wanting in tact, the kingliest of qualities. His endeavours to obtain favour for Roman Catholics were so abominably clumsy that no one could be blamed for interpreting them as an ill-timed endeavour to revive sixteenth-century fanaticism. He had an amazing faculty for rubbing people up the wrong way and making implacable enemies. He offended classes, he offended individuals. By tactless reproach, utterly unmerited, he sent poor Sandwich to his doom. When Arthur Herbert returned from the Mediterranean James tried to enlist his sympathy in schemes for dispensing with the laws of the country. Herbert replied that his scruples stood in the way. "Scruples?" sneered the King, "Didn't know you had any." "In that case," concluded the Admiral, "I may as well live up to my reputation;" and he promptly offered his services to William of Orange. Herbert held the highest position in the Navy under the Crown. James chose as his successor Lord Dart

* The diarist retired when his master was driven from the throne, and died at Clapham in 1703.

mouth, not because he had fought well at Solebay and the Texel, not because he was a worthy pupil of Spragge, but because he was a Roman Catholic. He went further. He sent Romanist priests to every ship in the fleet to celebrate the Mass. The sailors crowded across the sea in Herbert's wake to look for a Protestant master.

The trial of the Seven Bishops alienated the last of James's active supporters; and on the birth of his son, afterwards the Old Pretender, the certainty of a Papist dynasty made a Revolution inevitable. Foremost among the movers was Edward Russell, whose passion for revenge was unabated. The Prince of Orange was invited to depose his father-in-law, and after due consideration he consented. He foresaw the certain renewal of war with France, and dreaded lest religious affinity should induce James to engage his Navy in the service of France, now that the Navy of Holland (starved by the land war) was but a shadow of its former self. Hailed across the water as the saviour of English liberties he discreetly accepted the rôle, and nominated Herbert for the command of his forces, thus giving his whole expedition the air of a British crusade rather than that of a Dutch Armada.

There were still many captains well enough pleased with what James had done for the service, and when Russell joined the anti-Jacobites fresh measures were concerted to secure their adherence. The revolutionaries selected Lieutenant Byng (1663-1733), a Kentishman like Rooke, to proselytize the well-contented. Byng did his work sagaciously. He did not stir his listeners to an active part in the cause, but lulled them into quietude by pleading for passive resistance.

In consequence no English fleet blockaded the Prince of Orange in the Maas; and when in November, 1688, a Protestant wind sprang up in the east and Admiral Herbert dropped down channel with 15,000 men and fifty ships [one of them commanded by Captain Rooke], no English fleet contested with him the passage of the Straits. Why did Lord Dartmouth hug the Gunfleet? Did he suppose the enemies of James would force an entrance to the Thames? Why did he follow so leisurely in their train? Why did he put so safe an interval between himself and them? Why did he allow William to land unopposed when he reached the friendly waters of Torbay?

James's fleet revived struck no blow for the Sailor King, and when he heard of its desertion the last of the Stuarts abandoned his crown and fled. William III, Stadtholder of those very Provinces who had fought with England through three long wars, mounted the throne as his successor. Had he been able to dispense with English aid he would not have come, for his coming was a tacit acknowledgment that Holland would never again compete with England for the Admiralty of the Seas.

THE WAR OF THE ENGLISH SUCCESSION. 1689-97

Many a time no doubt in the not too good old days an unscrupulous lord of the manor would endeavour to annex to his already wide domain the fruitful plot of a thrifty cottager for no better reason than that its walls adjoined his own. He would employ force; and would perhaps be forcibly restrained by the united efforts of his less wealthy neighbours. He would nurse his grievance silently at first, but after a while he would order this hedge to be removed, that road widened, this common land reclaimed, and by the accumulation of petty injuries raise against himself in the neighbourhood a measureless volume of hatred.

By the Peace of Nymwegen Louis had been restrained in the same manner as the disturber of manorial trusts, and in the years that followed he adopted similar methods of reprisal. By the time that James II ascended the English throne, the powers of Europe had ample reason to resent his conduct, and in 1686, at the instigation of the Prince of Orange, they bound themselves in the League of Augsburg to oppose all further aggressions of the wily King of France. With an English Princess reigning at the Hague the allies hoped that James would lend his countenance to their scheme. But the revival of his Navy and the reclamation of his people to the one true fold absorbed his interest. On James Louis also cherished great expectations. But James was busy and regarded him not.

The European situation waited upon the crisis in England. Both sides wanted the British Navy, and both sides were ready to intervene in British politics sooner than fight the enemy without it. The success of William does not mean that Louis was napping or off his guard. By massing troops upon the Netherlands frontier

he could have prevented William from setting out at all; but his fleet, fresh from new triumphs in the Mediterranean, he could not have held William up as he passed the Straits. He offered James his services at the price of England's friendship. James refused. He required no help. No power could turn him off his sea-girt throne. Louis was disappointed, but he had always cards to play. He would allow William to set out, for either he would fail or the issue would hang in doubt. If he failed France was rid of her chiefest enemy. If the issue hung in doubt, James would perhaps learn to recognize his friends. At the worst, English and Dutch would hammer each other as of old and leave him free to compass his ambition. Complete success on William's part would of course prove exceedingly awkward, but complete success was impossible, for the Dutch fleet was defunct and the English newly vitalized.

Thus in his bloodless enterprise William not only ended a reign of tyranny as James's son-in-law, but as president of the League of Augsburg won his first success. When James arrived breathless at Versailles, he found Louis ready to give him every assistance; nor is it necessary to believe Louis disinterested. The furtherance of the Stuart cause was his obvious counter-check to the League. If he could help James sufficiently to occupy William's attention, William himself would be unable to take upon the continent that part which in the last war had proved so detrimental to the interests of France.

THE RELIEF OF LONDONDERRY

JULY, 1689.

The fortunes of the ex-King centred at first in Ireland where the entire Roman Catholic population supported his cause. Ferried across by the French, James received a boisterous welcome in the spring of 1689, and proceeded to the reduction of Londonderry which had declared for his enemies.

Exhorted by their naval advisers, William and Mary resolved to attack the line of Franco-Jacobite communications between Brest and the south-west of Ireland. Admiral Herbert was accordingly dispatched, but with a force hardly adequate in view of recent French successes, for the work that he had in hand. Herbert

flag was borne in the *Elisabeth*. The *Deptford* was commanded by Captain Rooke and the *Edgar* by Captain Shovel.

The gallant officer, whose name is indissolubly connected with that of Rooke, was born in the same year at a little Norfolk village a mile or two only from Burnham Thorpe. Shovel found two influential friends in his own native town. Sir Christopher Myngs took young Clowdisley to sea, and the boy of fourteen proved a worthy disciple, for he swam from one ship to another under fire with despatches in his mouth. This was in the Second Dutch War. At its conclusion Shovel served in a voyage of exploration under Captain Narbrough and perfected his seamanship on the coast of Chile. Under Narbrough he fought at Solebay, and attended Sir John to the Mediterranean where he made the acquaintance of Rooke. Both Myngs and Narbrough, as Cockthorpe men, were ready enough to help young Shovel; and as both of them were men of humble birth, who gloried in their parentage and were never tired of relating their good fortune, it is not altogether surprising that Shovel himself has for long been described as a "tarpaulin." His family, however, were gentle, and had been wealthy until devotion to the cause of Charles I ruined them. Shovel's father married a Miss Clowdisley, and the Admiral shares with Shakespeare and Wyclif the peculiar distinction of a name which cannot offend against orthography.*

On the last day of April, Herbert discovered a French fleet in Bantry Bay, whither it had brought 5,000 additional troops together with supplies of food and ammunition. On the day following the wind was against him, but he did his best to force an entrance to the bay as the crisis demanded a special effort. His nineteen ships were opposed by an excellently disciplined force of twenty-six sail under the Comte de Châteaurenault [1637-1716], an officer of sterling worth educated in the school of Duquesne. Herbert stood out to sea in order to amend his line, and Châteaurenault followed him. A more or less general action ensued. The French commander felt it his duty to drive the English away:

* There are at least twenty-five versions of the phenomenon. The Admiral's signature does not settle the matter, as he invariably subscribed himself "Clowd." There is further contention over the surname. The correct version is "Shovell" but the world has conspired to spell it otherwise.

the English considered it incumbent on him to prove that with numbers and wind against him he could still hold his own. Without any definite result, the objects aimed at by both were attained. Herbert was not defeated but found it as well to withdraw. The Jacobites celebrated the affair as a victory; and as their allies had established sea-communications in defiance of the power that ruled the waterways, they were quite entitled to do so. James asserted that Châteaurenault's victory was due to the dislike of the English to fight against their lawful sovereign. Whatever truth there may have been in the argument, it was not calculated to bind the Frenchmen closer to his service. William was far more tactful. He visited Herbert on his return, went aboard his flagship, took dinner with him, thanked him for his timely intervention and unhesitating attack, created him Baron Herbert of Torbay and Earl of Torrington, and asked him to distribute ten shillings apiece to all the seamen who had fought so bravely in his cause.*

Both Shovel and Rooke distinguished themselves in this battle, and won immediate recompense. Shovel received a knighthood, and Rooke was singled out by the Admiral to save the situation in the north of Ireland. As James's fortunes turned upon the siege of Derry, it was clear that Châteaurenault and his twenty-six ships would sail immediately northward, throw themselves in front of Lough Foyle, and complete the investment of the ill-fated town. The fall of Londonderry would give James the mastery of Ireland; it would, while detracting from the Protestant prestige, materially add to his own; and enable him, while the French fleet swept unchallenged up St. George's Channel, to concentrate all his strength on the instant invasion of England.

So little was this peril understood that Rooke was allotted but one ship in addition to his own. With all haste he sped on his errand, and reaching the north-east corner of Ireland, mounted guard to await the French, while a messenger set ashore on English soil rode for his life to summon the expeditionary force which was waiting to sail from the mouth of the Dee. A successful junction was accomplished, and four more battleships put themselves under his command, including the *Bonaventure* [Captain

* This generosity was certainly well-timed, seeing that the Navy on which he relied was the creation of the enemy whom he hoped to defeat through its agency.

Hopsonn] and the *Dartmouth* [Captain Leake]. With his little fleet of six, Rooke escorted into Lough Foyle the convoy of store-ships and the military under General Kirke; and once more resumed his task of awaiting Châteaurenault. General Kirke considered the situation. The banks of the river were lined with troops, and the river itself was blocked by a stalwart boom more than a quarter of a mile in length, firmly fastened to both shores by cables a foot thick. He concluded that nothing could be done, and informing the Commodore to that effect sent at once for reinforcements.

Meanwhile in Londonderry "a very small quantity of grain remained, and was doled out in mouthfuls. The stock of salted hides was considerable and by gnawing them the garrison appeased the rage of hunger. Dogs fattened on the blood of the slain who lay unburied round the town, were luxuries which few could afford to purchase. The price of a whelp's paw was five shillings and sixpence. . . . The people perished so fast, that it was impossible for the survivors to perform the rites of sepulture. There was scarcely a cellar in which some corpse was not decaying. Such was the extremity of distress that the rats who came to feast in these hideous dens were eagerly hunted and greedily devoured" [Macaulay].

General Kirke of course did not know the appalling extent of the famine, but after a long wait he received word from William to make the attempt with the troops at his disposal. Volunteers were called for from the convoy, and the *Mountjoy* and the *Phoenix* nobly offered their services. Commodore Rooke was asked for a warship, and selected the *Dartmouth*. Her commander, Captain Leake, bore a name that Rooke loved well enough, for Richard Leake, father of Captain John, had helped him to save the *Royal Prince* at the Texel. This perhaps was the reason for his choice. The responsibility of his position debarred the Commodore from indulging a desire for personal glory.

Under the wing of the *Dartmouth* the two merchantmen advanced against the boom. The *Mountjoy* broke it, but by the elasticity of the obstruction was hurled back upon the sands as from a catapult. Finding herself unpleasantly near to the bank, she fired all her guns together, and in so doing saved herself. She then made haste to follow her consort who had already passed through the breach, and while the little *Dartmouth* engaged the

besiegers in conversation the storeships unloaded their wares upon the quay. "First were rolled on shore barrels containing six thousand bushels of meal. Then came great cheeses, casks of beef, flitches of bacon, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, ankers of brandy." Legs that could barely support their owners raced to light bonfires on the ramparts, and tired arms felt the good blood pulsate again as they grasped the bell-ropes to ring a glorious peal. Londonderry was saved, and saved from the sea.

The part played by Rooke in the relief was undemonstrative, but if he was not to hold the mouth of Lough Foyle with a force almost as small as that of Horatius of old against the serried ranks of Tuscany, the fault was not his but Monsieur Châteaurenault's. The English Navy as represented by Rooke's diminutive fleet enjoyed in 1689 all the advantages of the command of the sea, which theoretically had passed to the victorious French.

This providential deliverance was an earnest of further success on the part of those who could recognize the value of sea-power. The Irish Protestants were jubilant, and William accepted their cause as his own. Rooke's services were again requisitioned. With the same perfected dispositions, and unremitting watchfulness he conveyed to Ireland the English army, unimpeded and without mishap. Having done all things well and noiselessly, he brought his sea-worn vessels home at the end of the year when his talent for the highest command was appropriately recognized, and the saviour of Derry became Rear-Admiral of the Red.

THE BATTLE OF BEACHY HEAD*

JUNE 30, 1690.

It is perhaps fair to suppose that Louis' eagerness to lure William away from the continental struggle blinded him to the possibilities of naval warfare in the Irish campaign. When he had satisfied himself that William had really fallen into his trap, he turned his thoughts to the conquest of the sea. Bantry Bay had proved what his sailors could do, and the English Channel was essential to him. Command of its waters could alone give him the power to land forces at will in Ireland, England, Holland.

* The French, with a proprietary right to stand sponsors, christen this battle BEVEZIERS.

and the Netherlands. He determined to make a great endeavour, and as a preliminary decided to unite his Mediterranean fleet with the fleet operating from Brest.

This force, amounting to seventy ships, he committed to Anne Hilarion de Cotentin, Comte de Tourville [1642-1701], one of the ablest seamen that his country has produced. The recent death of Duquesne left him foremost in his profession. He had served under the master. He had commanded the *Sceptre* in the battle in which De Ruyter was killed. Even in those days he had drawn attention to himself by the ingenuity of his dispositions. There was not a man in the service from carpenter to admiral whose place he was not competent to fill. Under an almost feminine appearance, well set off by the gentle courtesy of his manners, he concealed a reckless courage which would have marked him out among a host of braves. Tourville hoisted his flag in the *Soleil Royal*. As his Rear-Admiral he appointed Châteaurenault, the victor of Bantry, and as his Rear-Admiral Victor Marie d'Estrées [1660-1737], one of the inactive commanders of Solebay fame. The younger d'Estrées had been brought up in the school of Duquesne. He was a good officer: he was also a man of literary tastes, and when on shore was never so happy as when rearranging his books, his pictures and his medals, or like Rupert dabbling in chemistry and kindred sciences. The largest fleet that France had ever sent to sea was not unworthy of the land of Colbert, and the officers were not unworthy of the fleet.

Under normal circumstances William should have been able to meet the French Armada with forces adequate for its discomfiture. He could draw upon the Navy not only of England but of Holland. Events, however, conspired to put the allies in a minority. A squadron had been sent to intercept the Toulon contingent as it sailed to join the Brest, which failing in its purpose lost time in unavailing search and failed to return. Then again William was so resolute to bring Irish affairs to a definite conclusion and free the right of a battle-front which stretched from the Shannon to the Rhine, that in June, 1690, he crossed in person to Carrickfergus and called on Shovel to provide an escort. By these detachments the fleet was put at a serious disadvantage.

Admiral the Earl of Torrington with his flag in the *Royal Sovereign* had at his disposal fifty-five ships in all to Tourville's

seventy. Admiral Rooke in the *Duchess* served immediately under him. The White Squadron included the majority of the Dutch ships and was commanded by Cornelius Evertzen "the youngest". The Blue squadron was nominally under Admiral Russell; but the leading part he had played in the Revolution, his intimate acquaintance with politics, his taste for diplomacy and finesse made him almost as valuable on shore as on the sea. Before his departure for Ireland William had appointed a small committee. To them he assigned the task of offering sage counsel to George Mary who was to wield the sceptre in his absence. Russell had just returned from a diplomatic mission, was nominated to present the fleet on this committee, and his place at sea was temporarily filled by Sir Ralph Delavall, a brave sailor who had made his worth at Bantry Bay.

In the last week of June, 1690, the French were off the Wight, and Torrington interposed himself between the enemy and the Straits of Dover. He had now to consider what line he should adopt. Tourville had come. Either he had an army on board which he hoped to smuggle into England, or he intended to meet the English fleet and sink it as a preliminary measure. The most satisfactory method of dealing with him would be to administer chastisement severe enough to cure him of a taste for swaggering up the Channel. But here was the difficulty. Torrington was in a manifest inferiority, and the chances of administering chastisement were, to say the least of it, remote. What then was to be done! Torrington was convinced that a prudent defence alone was justifiable. The French would never dare to land troops so long as there was a "fleet in being" to hover on their flank. Evidently they meant to destroy him, and what better method of preventing them than a refusal to be destroyed? He would play a waiting game, withdrawing as the French advanced, advancing as the French withdrew. It has been argued, and will again be argued, that this was not the hero's choice, that Albemarle would have unhesitatingly attacked regardless of odds. It is highly probable that Albemarle would have done so, and it is certain that his efforts would have left the enemy powerless to utilize whatever victory they gained. But to prove Albemarle right is not to prove Torrington wrong. If the occasion had demanded immolation, he would have awaited it as fearlessly as Rooke waited for Châleau-

renault in Lough Foyle. England, however, was not at her last gasp. Judicious delay would give Sir Clowdisley and the rest an opportunity to return and redress the balance. Torrington had won his name for bravery; he had therefore established a right to be cautious when he considered caution essential. The victor of Waterloo withdrew at Torres Vedras; and the system of Torres Vedras worked out in the Channel in 1690 would have saved the Navy from a serious defeat.

Meanwhile in London excitement was running high. The movement of William and Mary was daily becoming more uncertain. If it is an exaggeration to say that the country was full of Jacobites, it is at least true to say that it was full of anti-Dutch. A sense of nervous anxiety Mary summoned her Council, and received their advice. It was generally recognized that a crisis had arrived. Government crisis. Any moment might see the Revolution settlement rooted up and flung aside with contempt. The violation of English soil would certainly spell William's ruin. The presence of Tourville in the Channel was a more serious menace to the last scion of the House of Orange than the legions of Louis on the Rhine frontier. Englishmen were already calling their monarchs impious parent-hunters, shameless Dutch folk who farmed the land of their adoption. What would they say if the French landed? Not a moment must be lost. The fleet must throw itself upon the foe; it must defeat him; it must drive him away altogether. Oh! that William were back! Thus Mary. The question then arose, Did Lord Torrington realize the gravity of the situation? Would he be certain to bring the enemy to battle?

For the resolution of these doubts the Council turned to the man of all others who should know, if any man knew—Russell. There was, however, one particular which unfitted Russell for the delivery of an unbiassed opinion. He was brave and skilful, but he saw in Torrington one who had usurped his place at the Revolution. It was he that had brought William to the throne; it was he who should command in chief upon the sea. As the Council awaited Russell's answer, he must have remembered that Herbert had already met the French in battle, and found himself outnumbered; that, though his country was not imperilled, yet he had done his best with the means at his disposal. He must have known that a

man of Herbert's bravery would fight the first drop of his blood sooner than allow the French to land. Such thoughts recurred to him, he set them aside and informed the Council that he did not consider Torrington a man who could be trusted to act as the occasion demanded. He feared that he did not mean to fight. Poor Queen Mary grew agitated. But Chatham! Would not Count Tourville sail up the Thames as De Ruyter had done. Did Admiral Russell think it would be dangerous to fight against such odds? Admiral Russell hastened to inform Her that so far from thinking so, he would have no hesitation in he there, in fighting against a thousand. Did Admiral think there would be any harm in sending a message telling him to fight? A womanly question. Mary was anxious to avoid another Chatham catastrophe. William say when he came home! Russell must have an inward struggle before he returned answer that he saw no harm. Did the state-artificer really suppose that the Earl would fight his country with greater zeal, with more conspicuous usefulness, if he received an injunction pushing him into battle with the inferior? That nothing but necessity would make a patriot of him? The schemer resolved to rule the Navy or to ruin it?

Acting on the advice of Torrington's rival Mary wrote to her Admiral as follows:—

We apprehend ye Consequences of your retiring to ye Gunfleet to be so fatal, y^t We choose rather y^t you should upon any advantage of ye Wind give battle to ye enemy. . . . By no means ever lose sight of ye French fleet, whereby they may have opportunities of making attempts in ye Rivers of Medway or Thames.

Whatever Torrington may have thought of this letter, he never dreamed of disobeying it. The missive in itself was a reflection on his honour and left him no choice. Having the advantage of the wind he matched his fifty-five ships with his adversary's seventy.

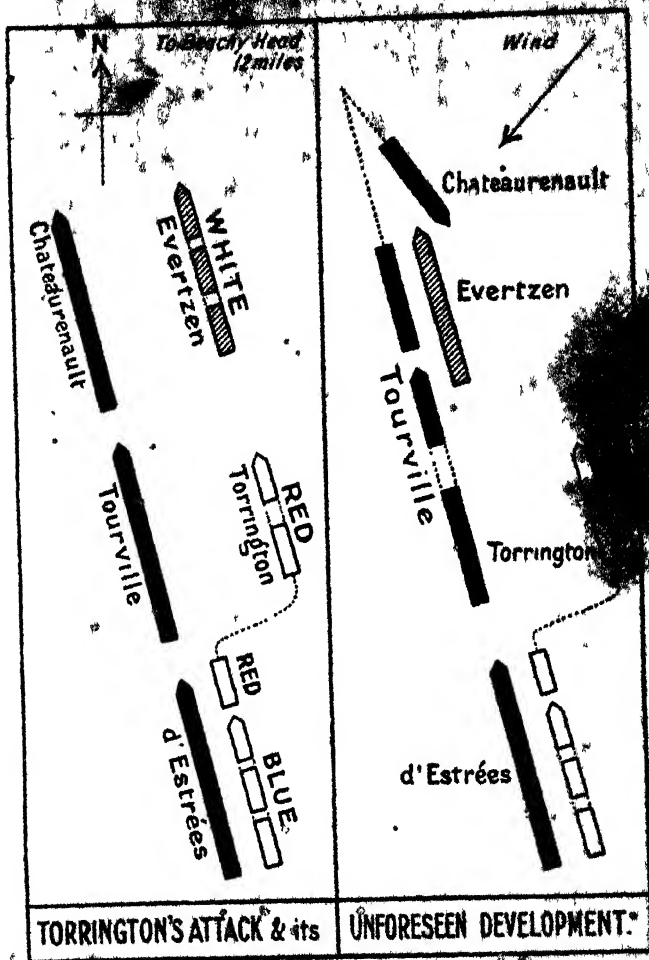
The Battle of Beachy Head derives much of its interest from the fact that both admirals were commanders of genius. Both appreciated to the full the enormous importance of massing their strength upon a portion of the enemy's line. As contributors to the art of manipulating a force at sea, they deserve comparison with the greatest masters—with Albemarle, De Ruyter, Rodney and Nelson. Tourville's ideas embodied a development of the

"Doubling" manœuvre conducted with partial efficacy during the Third Dutch War. Its operation made enormous demands on the dockyard, for success could only be "quite certain" in the event of numerical superiority. The longer line endeavoured to put a portion of the enemy between two fires by coiling its head or tail round its adversary's van or rear. The process presented no difficulty of course if the aggressor had the wind, and from to leeward could also be practised at any rate in the van; even in the rear it was not impossible, for the engaged part of the doubling squadron could gradually lose sea-room to leeward, while the antagonists after it; while the overlapping part hugged the windward and gained to windward of both.

Torrington's hopes were based upon an amplified system of the old Instructions had perfected the line but left much to be desired. Torrington's improvements were intended to make it more flexible. Not only were the Red, White and Blue divisions to be capable of independent movement, but van, centre and rear of each division to be capable of detachment and reunion. The Line was thus become as pliant and pliable as a whip in the hand of a cow-boy. Its wielder would be able to refuse his right while pressing home his left, transfer one-third of his centre to his rear, and with sinuous flexions play his lash on the writhing limbs of his victim.

In the present instance Torrington decided to attack the enemy's rear with as brave a show as his inferiority would allow. This of course left an insufficiency of ships for the enemy's centre, and van, if the whole line were to engage. He had no intention, however, of allowing his centre and van to engage until the French were disorganized by his onslaught on their rear. His own division and the Dutch were, in football terminology, to "mark" the remainder of the enemy, who would be permitted to continue on their way with faculty for mischief seriously impaired by the absence of antagonists to injure.

The signal for battle was given, and at first all seemed to go well. The attack on Tourville's rear was opened and developed, and Torrington extended the rearmost part of his own division to support it. At the same time he refused the vanward ships of his division to disengage the enemy. But in the White Squadron all things went wrong. What possessed the Dutch it is difficult to say.



THE BATTLE OF BEACHY HEAD

June 30, 1690

[N.B.—The separation into squadrons is in Fig. 1 usually pronounced. In this alupa were equidistant, Torrington's Attack would leave the vanguard of the enemy not only unopposed, but "unmarked".]

Perhaps one or two captains committed themselves and forced the remainder to support them. Whatever the reason, the entire van were soon engaged, hammering the enemy in grand style with all the dogged fighting qualities of Jan Evertzen and Cornelius Tromp. Nothing could have been more magnificent, but it was not war. Inferior to the enemy in numbers they gave the wily Tourville the opportunity to double, and the ships of the French centre, hitherto incapable of mischief, now pushed forward under press of sail to reinforce Châteaurenault. The Dutch were literally encompassed; and if they were not annihilated, they certainly received punishment as severe as any administered by Blake or Albemarle.*

The completeness of the tragedy was prevented by the turn of tide. Observing it the Dutch cast anchor with all sails set. The English followed their example and the French were carried out of range before they realized what was happening. Under cover of night the allies weighed anchor and crept away eastwards. Tourville pursued, and Torrington, deeming it inexpedient to indulge in fresh hostilities on behalf of disabled vessels, burnt more than ten of them to avoid capture. Arriving at the Thames he pulled up the buoys, withdrew his ships into a position of comparative safety, and on his arrival in London was cast with all ignominy into the Tower. A court-martial was summoned. Rooke's evidence was all important, and proved invaluable to the accused. The judges considered their verdict and found the Admiral not-guilty. There was no reason to suspect him of disloyalty to the new régime; still less was there reason to suspect that cowardice in any form had influenced his proceedings before or during the battle. William perhaps formed a judgment different from that of the court. He certainly never employed the Admiral again. Stories were set on foot that the wicked Earl had

* It is much to be regretted that the "Doubling" movement triumphed at Beachy Head. Endeavours to provide a counter-move had a deadening effect on tactics. Henceforth the weight of expert opinion advocated a line *conterminous* with that of the foe. The much abused *Article xix.* added to the Instructions after this encounter, reads as follows: "If the admiral and his fleet have the wind of the enemy, and they have stretched themselves in a line of battle, the van of the admiral's fleet is to steer with the van of the enemy's and there to engage them." This doctrine, reasonable enough for defensive purposes, strangled the growth of effective measures to ensure an overwhelming victory.

purposely sent the Dutch to their red death ! Knowing the unpopularity of the Hollanders he had sacrificed them to gratify national resentment ! It is indisputable that the Dutch were actively engaged and Torrington was not Mischief-makers glorying in a wrong interpretation found here incontestable proof of a ridiculous story. How far William was deceived, how far vindictive, it is not possible to say

There have been few sadder days in British history than that on which the news of Beachy Head arrived The fleet, in which men trusted, had failed in the hour of need. Those who had dashed the great Armada in pieces, who had conquered the countrymen of De Ruyter and the Tromps, were subjected to humiliation by a new power that had hardly reached its manhood on the sea What use would the French make of their victory ? Would they content themselves like De Ruyter with a raid ? or was the flag itself to be humbled in the dust ? At the thought a new spirit breathed through the land The Government was not overthrown as Mary had feared The patriots rallied round the throne, the disaster braced the constitution like a tonic, and a martial valour nerved men for stirring times The peril, momentarily at least, was sufficient to disturb the boldest Had James in 1690 been as ready as Parma in 1588, Englishmen might have fought in southern shire with Tourville's countrymen

But James was not ready On the day following the defeat of his forces in the Channel, William hurled destruction on his rival at the Battle of the Boyne The unfortunate James fled from a stricken field, flung himself into a boat at Kinsale, and betook himself to his magnificent protector at Versailles. He besought Louis to invade England now that the opportunity offered, now that her first line of defence had suffered inglorious repulse. Louis shook his head. He was faced by the League of Augsburg. He knew that any fresh attempt must be confided to the luckless hand of James, who was hardly likely to succeed in the greater enterprise after his ignominious failure in the less. He blamed himself not at all, though he was as much at fault. He had himself ruined the Irish campaign by allowing Rooke to relieve Londonderry, and Shovel to convey the Orange flag across St. George's Channel

While James pleaded in vain, England, all-militant, made good use of her respite, and with her wonderful property of marine recuperation succeeded in equipping a fleet of over seventy sail by the beginning of 1691. These were joined by a Dutch contingent; and the command was given to the influential and not over-scrupulous Russell, who sought his adversary but found him not. With admirable art Tourville kept his fleet at the mouth of the Channel, and took toll of the home-returning trade, but resolutely refused to be drawn by the irate Englishmen into a risky general engagement. His slippery tactics have won high commendation from modern critics, but they failed to satisfy the Grand Monarque. Louis had been bitterly disappointed with Beachy Head. The English had turned tail and fled. Why was not their flight converted to a rout? Because there was a poltroon at the head of his fleet. Why did not Tourville turn even now upon this Russell, scatter his vessels to the four winds of heaven, and prove himself the Turenne of the seas? When Louis had command of the Channel, he might have kept William out of Ireland altogether. Even now Tourville's skill kept the embers glowing in the south-west. But Louis had no feeling for the interaction of land and sea operations. He hoped that Tourville by sledge-hammer blows would redress the balance against him on the land.

THE BATTLE OF BARFLEUR

MAY 19, 1692

The months went by, and England forgot her panic. Excitement gradually subsided, and once more gave place to dissatisfaction with the Government. William had of course good cause for the confidence he reposed in his countrymen. Ginkell was beating out the last sparks of Irish rebellion. Evertzen alone had proved worthy of his steel at Beachy Head. Russell, on the other hand, was proving himself, if anything, more incompetent than Torrington; for Torrington at least was willing to watch the Dutchmen fight! This attitude of William's is sufficiently intelligible, but it was exceedingly irritating and maddened Russell, Marlborough, and many who under normal circumstances would have been types of loyal Englishmen. They found William's disposal of State offices to Dutchmen perfectly intolerable. There

was but one remedy. They wrote to James, and assured him that they were devoted to his cause, and that if he would only come and deliver the country from the Dutch invaders half of the army would join his standards and two-thirds of the fleet rehoist his flag. This news was exceedingly gratifying to James's heart, especially as it came from Russell, whose commanding position removed the element of doubt. Russell did not omit to mention that James's gallant leading at Lowestoft and Solebay was still affectionately remembered by himself and others, notably by Richard Carter, and John Ashby who had won a knighthood by his work at Bantry Bay. But with all his professions Russell was not a Jacobite; he was merely an anti-Williamite. He cared nothing for James's cause, his beliefs, or his theory of kingship. He conceived of himself as playing the part of Monk, gracefully calling back his sovereign from exile, setting him upon the throne, and as gracefully receiving more rewards than he would care to enumerate.

James may be pardoned if he failed to understand the exact significance of Russell's position. The throne was no longer vacant as in 1660, and in order to remove the hero of Boyne Water, an army of some dimensions would be needed. He hastened to Louis XIV and set before him the documentary evidence of the English reaction. Louis professed genuine satisfaction, and concerted with his cousin a bold campaign for 1692. The offensive should be resumed against the Netherlands in order to entice William to defend them. A second army meantime should be assembled in Normandy and at the crucial moment re-enact with happier circumstance the Water Procession of 1688. One other thing was clearly requisite. Tourville must be made to understand that there could be no more fooling about at the mouth of the Channel. He must not avoid battle as he had done throughout the previous year. He must make it his special object to prevent the Dutch from joining the English, and fight rather than allow the junction to take place. A fleet of transports was collected at La Hogue, and behind it a great camp was crowded with troops, French and Irish, ready for the second Norman Conquest. James was there in person. Tourville would keep the Dutch from joining the English. Russell and two-thirds of the fleet would join their rightful king; the remainder would probably sink

away as Dartmouth had done in 1688; and a few hours later James would disembark at Southampton amid the roars of enthusiastic Englishmen.

It will be seen at once that much depended on Russell; but Russell's attitude was quite illogical. Willing enough to play Monk's part, for which a lack of honesty unfitted him, he was in no mood to see England overrun with Frenchmen. James surrounded by French courtiers would be a degree worse than William and his Dutchmen. "Do not think," he remarked to a Jacobite envoy, "that I will let the French triumph over us in our own seas. Understand this, that if I meet them, I fight them; ay, though His Majesty should be on board." Tourville too had his word to say. He was hotly indignant at the unmerited censures on his conduct. His honour and his leadership must be justified. The fleet at his disposal was utterly inadequate, for adverse weather kept the Toulon Squadron within the Straits and left him only forty-four sail. But he was not a poltroon, and he meant to vindicate his honour even at the peril of his ships.

The opening of the campaign agreed with anticipation. William rushed across the North Sea to grip the danger there, and poor Queen Mary was left alone to face the possible arrival of an angry father and thousands of Frenchmen. She proved herself as worthy of the occasion as Philippa in the days of Neville's Cross or Katharine in the days of Flodden Field. The stories of Jacobitism had reached her ears: she knew that the Navy was honeycombed with disaffection to William and herself: she had heard of the villainous disposition of Admiral Carter: she had listened with pain to detractors of Russell himself. What was she to do? She acted on the impulse; trusted to her womanly tact, and wrote to Russell a letter. She told him that distressing news had reached her that the fleet was disloyal, and she therefore felt it her duty to send him word that she knew such reports must be false. She put implicit trust in the fleet, knowing that, when all else failed, the mother of ships could rely upon her sons.

Russell called together his captains, read to them Her Majesty's letter, and with the consent of all sent back an appropriate answer of effusive loyalty. He then visited every ship in the fleet and enjoined upon their companies the need of patriotism. "If your officers play you false," he said, "overboard with them; yes, and

with the first of all ! " And at this very moment James, from whom Queen Mary certainly did not inherit her *savoir faire*, was contemplating a recovery of the English Crown with French and Irish soldiers ; resting on the comfortable assurance received from Russell himself that the greater part of the British fleet was with him heart and soul.

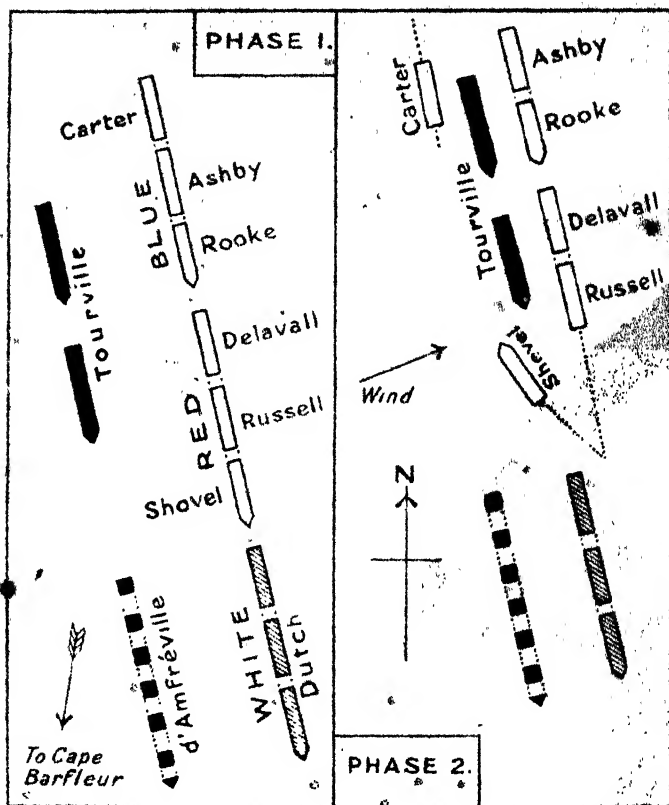
Russell's flag flew in the *Britannia*, first of her name, built from the designs of Sir Phineas Pett, and the latest word in naval construction. Delavall and Shovel commanded the Red Squadron under him ; Sir Clowdisley in the *Royal William*, and Sir Ralph in that heart of oak, the *Royal Sovereign*, as eager for battle as when she scorned the sands with Blake at the fight off the Kentish Knock. The Dutch had the post of honour in the van ; the Blue Squadron was committed to Sir John Ashby, with Rooke seconding him in the *Neptune*. Carter, the firebrand, with his flag in the *Duke*, brought up the rear of a splendid fleet which numbered all but a hundred sail.

Tourville came up Channel from the direction of Brest with a S.W. breeze bearing him along. Some sea-leagues from Cape Barfleur he discovered the allies stretching on the starboard tack toward the place where James had made his camp. The delay caused by D'Estrées' non-appearance had given ample time for their junction, and to all intents and purposes Tourville's task was ended ere it had well begun. His position in the wind enabled him to decline battle. Even now had he but known, couriers were seeking him. Louis' order was cancelled. There was no longer need to fight. But the couriers came not. Tourville knew that he had been called a coward, and proudly he flew the flag for battle in the *Soleil Royal*, most glorious vessel afloat.

At Beachy Head he had shown how to fight against a fleet of inferior proportions. The position was now reversed, but with the same skill he approached it. Like Torrington he refused his van or right wing, but to avoid being doubled, he increased the interval between the ships so that the leading squadron was continuous with the Dutch line opposite. His main attack he developed in centre and rear. The French ships worked in admirable combination, but their very skill was a source of weakness, for their intimate co-operation and deficient numbers left a line of unmarked ships ahead of their central squadron, while behind their

rearmost vessels the division of Carter, the suspect, found itself unopposed.

Sympathy is ever extended to a plucky minority, but it would be vain to deny the skill of the British sailors. Sir Clowdisley at



THE BATTLE OF BARFLEUR

May 19, 1692

the head of the allied centre was quick to see his opportunity, and going about on the opposite tack divided the enemy's fleet in the manner recommended by Albemarle for a fleet operating to leeward; while Admiral Carter, taking a leaf from Tourville's book, doubled

upon the rear of the French and put them between two fires. The intricacy of these manœuvres involved an expenditure of time, but their menacing aspect convinced the great French leader that a prolongation of the struggle under such conditions could but end in the annihilation of his fleet. Up to this point no single ship had surrendered: but human endurance could go no further, and honour was satisfied. The wind was still behind him, and now the tide began to set up Channel. His thoughts recurred to Beachy Head, and as he dropped anchor with all sails set, he had the satisfaction of seeing the allies carried out of range as he had been himself two years before.

Admiral Carter, on whose fair name foul infamy had breathed, was still to windward of Tourville's fleet, and now found himself cut off from all his friends. Without hesitation he decided to carve a way to glory through his enemies. A fierce encounter ensued at closest quarters, and the Admiral was one of the first to fall. The wound was grave, but he refused to go below. While he lived, his place was the quarter-deck. They tried to make him easy, and his sword was now merely an encumbrance, but he clung to it feverishly. "Surrender to the foreigner. . . . Yield his sword. . . . Never!" Had those now seen him who had called him traitor, their suspicions would have died unuttered. Carter's Flag Captain bent over him to receive his last request. "Fight her, lad," he gasped, in dying accents, "fight her as long . . . as long . . . as she can . . . swim."

With this impetuous onslaught on the one side, and the ships of Rooke on the other, nine of the French rear saw their hopes destroyed, and with the wind behind them fled to the north and east. The remainder under cover of night and a friendly fog made the best of their way towards the west on the strength of the ebbing tide.

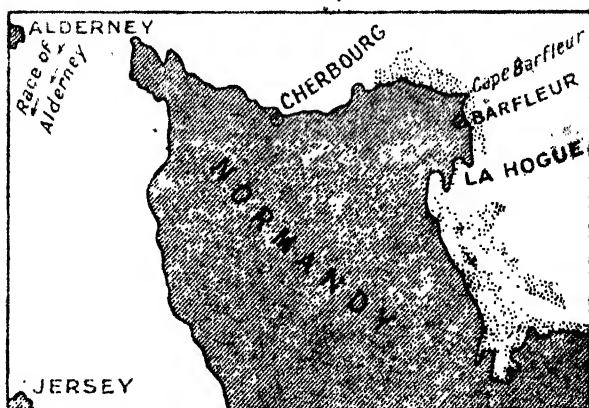
EPILOGUE. LA HOGUE.

MAY 23 AND 24, 1692

Such was the Battle of Barfleur. Tourville had fought gallantly and Russell had worsted him with a force clearly preponderant: a lame affair, not by any means the thunderbolt that decides the fate of dynasties. But the best was still to come. In the days

immediately following the battle every effort was made by the English to follow up their advantage; and one man at least drew upon himself the eyes of all, and converted an indecisive encounter into a triumphant and exultant victory.

Of the thirty-five French ships that had drifted down Channel on the ebb, twenty, under D'Aufreville, with a temerity born of despair, committed themselves to the Race of Alderney between that island and the mainland, and running between Scylla and Charybdis arrived in safety at St. Malo [see page 119]. The *Soleil Royal*, whose wounds severe had forced Tourville at last to shift his flag, maimed and companioned by two consorts only,



LA HOGUE

staggered into Cherbourg: Here Sir Ralph Delavall found her and burnt her to the water-line with her sisters by her side.

Twenty in St. Malo! Three devoured by flames! What of the rest! Guided by a happier star twelve doubled Cape Barfleur and reached the appointed haven of La Hogue. As an anchorage the harbour left something to be desired; but in military preparedness, nothing. Twin forts, St. Vaast and Lisset, guarded the approach, and between them the great Franco-Irish army awaited transit on the self-same spot where Norman William had mustered his army six centuries before. James was there in person. Louis' marshals stood round him, and gave him the best of their advice. The

French were of opinion that there was nothing to fear. James, tactless as ever [but forgiveness comes easily], reminded his counsellors that English sailors were different from all others. He suggested that the troops should be taken aboard. This roused the wrath of Tourville, who refused to hear of such a thing. Accordingly the ships were warped as near as possible to the shore, and carefully bestowed, six under the guns of Fort Lisset, six under the guns of St. Vaast.

On the 23rd the English arrived, and a resolution was at once adopted. The twelve battleships must be destroyed. The operation did not admit of a general action, for the water was too shallow. The perilous bloody task was confided to Admiral George Roke, who shifted his flag to the *Eagle* and commenced operations with avidity. Collecting all the boats of the fleet, some 200 in number, he manned them and covered their approach by the fire of certain smaller ships, whose draught qualified them as an escort. The presence as spectators of the army of invasion appealed to the sailors, augmenting their zeal and tickling their sense of humour. They bent to the oar with a will, and raced to see who would reach the warships first. The ponderous army took up its position on the beach prepared to do their worst; but the boats' crews were hardly in danger until they reached the ships, and the ships being stranded found themselves, like Gulliver at Lilliput, helpless and shackled, and tormented by swarms of diminutive antagonists.

The dusk of evening descended as the English completed their preparations, and as the situation of the French fleet decided what form the attack should take, so its unexpected nature and its suddenness robbed them of the leisure in which to find its effective countercheck. Cheer after cheer arose from the boats as they neared their destination, and though Fort Lisset and the batteries on land did their best, and though the shallowness of the water allowed the cavalry on shore to act as horse-marines, the boats' crews suffered little on their way. Swarming and scrambling, they clambered up on board, and while some turned the guns against fort and batteries, others, acting under Roke's directions, lashed the wretched vessels stem to stern. No time was lost; no undue haste displayed. When all was ready the battleships of France were given to the flames. Tourville groined, the

soldiers cursed, and the incendiaries rowed back. In the mind of James regret and admiration struggled for the mastery. "None but my English tars," he said, "could have done so gallant a deed."

How night was spent in the French camp it is impossible to say. If a tireless watch was kept, nothing less was needed, for in the early morning back came Admiral Rooke and his boatmen, lustier than ever, to judge by the way they shouted. There were still six ships, and they lay under the formidable guns of St. Vaast. But now panic seized the French, and the second part of Rooke's task was speedily accomplished. It remained to dispose of the numberless transports, and this was also done with comfortable ease.

All was now over; and with a cruel but delicious appreciation of irony the Englishmen returned from the second conflagration making the welkin re-echo with the strains of "God save the King!" As he listened, James's feelings were those of a vanquished gladiator who, choking under his rival's foot, hears the amphitheatre ring with peals of joy for that rival's victory.

Few exploits in the annals of the Navy have been more complete than this. Little wonder if men forgot their debt to Russell as they lavished their praise on Rooke. Little wonder if they referred to 1692 as the year of La Hogue in preference to Barfleur. There is poetic justice in their waywardness.* Russell, who had juggled with the destinies of two kings, had done little to enhance his reputation as a seaman by his advantage over Tourville's little force. That advantage had been changed into a triumph by Rooke's destruction of twelve splendid battleships.

No one realized this better than William. On his return from the Low Countries he visited Portsmouth, dined with the Admiral, and conferred upon him the well-earned honour of knighthood. He had good reason to be pleased. The flag had come back: the command of the sea was once more in English keeping. He was now free to pursue his plans unhindered. He could cross the North Sea at his own convenience, and land English troops in the Netherlands without fear of interruption. In his medal to com-

* To this day the good ship *Barfleur* commemorates the more correct but less popular name.

memorate Barfleur, men-of-war are seen gallantly pounding one another; but in that to commemorate La Hogue the lion and unicorn dash forward to remove the impudent Gallic cock who has been crowing from his perch upon the trident of the seas. *Imperium palagi nobis!*

Queen Mary was no less pleased; and to give outward expression of her gratitude to the brave sailors who had fought and died for her, she determined to convert the Palace of Greenwich into a hospital for seamen incapacitated in the service of their country. The birthplace of Elizabeth had given place to a roomier dwelling designed by Sir Christopher Wren for Charles II. Incomplete at that monarch's death the new structure lacked a motive and an occupant. Mary's scheme was deservedly popular, and the Queen's list included a donation of £100 from the new knight of La Hogue.

If the events of 1692 were a source of constant satisfaction to William and Mary, for James they spelled the ruin of his hopes. His cause was dead, and though others might lift hereafter the banner of Jacobitism, the victor of Lowestoft had fought his latest fight. Of all the tactless things he ever did, his attempt to recover the Crown of England with the help of alien troops certainly lacked most of politic perception. It dispersed for ever the party that was learning to forget his tyranny in his true-born English extraction and sailor-like qualities. His career ended not when he threw the great seal of England into the Thames, but when he heard Rooke's sailors sing their lullaby.

For Louis the case was different. Barfleur and La Hogue can never stand beside Gravelines and Trafalgar. Every one knew what to expect if Parma crossed the sea in 1588: every one knew what to expect if Napoleon crossed in 1805. But Louis had not risked his all in the adventure. William, not England, was the object of his hate. With Europe in arms against him, the blow in the Channel drove in his extreme left: not without reason he affected to regard it only in this light. But if he had not risked his all, he had at least risked his fleet. The sea-power which had sprung ready-armed from the head of Colbert, which had begotten a Tourville and Duquesne, which had overthrown the navy of Holland under the shadow of Mount Etna, which had humbled the countrymen of Blake at Beachy Head, was vanquished, scattered to

The four winds of charred and rotting on the coast of Normandy. The fault was none of Tourville's, and to Louis' credit he was not slow to recognize this. He soothed the aggrieved leader by his condescension, and presented him with the baton of a *Maréchal* of France.

The victor of Barfleur had reason to envy the vanquished. Russell had been boastful and self-assertive, domineering and unfaithful. He had done little enough in the battle with the ships at his command. But the harshest critic will scarcely applaud his dismissal for failure to complete the destruction of his enemies. Such treatment was wholly undeserved. It was also little and impolitic. Whether Russell indulged in further correspondence with James cannot be decided; but at least it is certain that in the very next year the sea plans of England were discovered to her enemies.

THE SMYRNA CONVOY. 1693

The trade of England with the Levant had for years been growing steadily, but the outbreak of war with France had paralysed the commercial activities of William's subjects alike in London and Amsterdam. The merchant fleet awaiting convoy to Stamboul and Aleppo numbered 400, and when Barfleur gave the allies control of the sea, it was resolved to send Sir George Rooke with a squadron to safeguard its passage. With the Mediterranean to traverse, it was necessary to give Rooke a force capable of overcoming any resistance that might be offered by D'Estrées and the Toulon ships who were anxious to make amends for their failure to join Tourville in '92. To this end a small fleet, partly English, partly Dutch, was put at his disposal. The presence of Tourville and his veterans at Brest invited further caution, and the entire Channel fleet escorted Sir George through the danger zone. Sir George thought it would be well to look into Brest to make sure that the *Maréchal* was really there. He was overruled by his temporary superiors but ventured in their despite to record a protest. Fussiness some will call it; strategy others. Rooke was never seen to better advantage than when making those arrangements that pave the way to success. When the steps that he con-

sidered necessary were neglected by superiors, he cannot be blamed for subsequent mishaps.

When Brest was passed the Channel fleet turned back, and Rooke proceeded alone. All went well as far as Cape St. Vincent. Here were seen certain French ships which fled at the English approach. Rooke proposed to heave to until a reconnaissance was made of the force in front; but the Dutch assured him that the vessels in question had been caught napping and were ready for safety. Rooke thought otherwise. To satisfy himself he gave chase and snapped up a victim. Closely questioned the capture exactly corroborated the Dutch contention. Rooke shrugged his shoulders. Time thus spent was never lost.

The fleet advanced and plunged head-foremost into the very arms of an ambuscade.

Tourville was not in Brest at all. He had united his fleet with the Mediterranean, and had not only laid a trap on the coast of Portugal, but baited it with flying and lying couriers.

* Had Rooke been a perfectly free agent, this misadventure could never have happened. Thrust into it, he did what he could to get out. The odds were four to one. His first thought was to sacrifice the entire war-fleet on behalf of the merchantmen. He ordered the line of battle, and his resolute demeanour and calm assurance persuaded Tourville that it would be necessary to act with discretion. He therefore drew up his forces, and while he did so Rooke dispersed the convoy in every direction. Then having caused the maximum of delay, he also turned before the wind and carried off his force from the clutches of his disappointed enemy. Not a dissentient voice questioned his exemplary skill. He saved three-quarters of the merchant-fleet and rightly decided that there was no crisis to justify sacrifice. As well blame Horatius for leaping into the Tiber when the bridge was down, as blame Sir George for carrying his fleet into safety after he had done everything possible to save the helpless.

The war of the English Succession to all intents was ended at the Battle of Barfleur; but Louis had still to oppose upon the continent the Augsburg League with the King of England as its President. For five weary years [1692-97] the war dragged on, but he would not again challenge the English fleet. He flung aside

the trident as unbecoming to His Majesty, and contented himself with the glamour of shield and sword. But if he refused to fight again at sea on equal terms, the Smyrna convoy had shown him a weakness of his adversary. Henceforward he harried the trade of England in the hope of crippling her wealth.*

When Charles II exploited privateering, England had suffered deep disgrace at De Ruyter's hands. Louis was more fortunate. He avoided the mistake of Charles. He kept his fleets "in being" instead of laying them up. The capital ships of the English were in consequence busily employed in "doing nothing"; and the difficulty of "doing nothing" really well receives ample testimony from the journal of Sir George. During the latter years of the war he was obliged to watch Toulon with feline perseverance resting on Plymouth as his nearest base!

The subjects of William obtained little satisfaction by counter-raids on the shipping of France. They helped themselves freely, but there was so little to take. Colbert's system had never had time to fructify, and Louis had not the mines of Chile and Peru, or the products of Amboyna and the Indies. He was living, had he but known it, on his capital; and the very impotence of the English to revive the days of Drake promised their ultimate victory. The trident is the sceptre of all seas. When the *Roi Soleil* flung it away as a fighting instrument, he lost the strength that it lent to his arm, and found himself each year less competent to wield the sword. In 1697 he was exhausted. The splendid resources of France had enabled her to hold out against the whole of Europe for an incredible time, but now she needed time to recuperate. In September a treaty was signed at Ryswick. Louis abandoned all that he had grasped since Nymwegen, and acknowledged William as England's lawful king.†

In the year that followed the Peace, Rooke was elected M.P. for Portsmouth, a seat he retained till he retired from active life. His parliamentary career is to be regretted: for party strife was unusually bitter in days when the crown itself was so uncertain a possession. It would have mattered little if Rooke had supported

* *Vide infra*, p. 120.

† One wrong was righted at the Peace. Admiral Edward Russell, who with all his faults had done many a good turn to the House of Orange, was raised to the peerage as Earl of Orford and Viscount Barfleur.

the Whig majority; but his steady devotion to Tory principles brought him many ill-natured and influential enemies.

THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION. 1702-1713

Although the Peace of Ryswick seemed a genuine pacification, its clauses promised no durability. The two antagonists, the Kings of England and France, consented to a handshake, but they scowled the while, as men must do who have fought round after round without decisive result. Each felt that, save for a single weak spot in his armour, he could not have failed to win. A truce at least gave time to remedy defects.

William had gained a great advantage in his struggle for the land of his birth by his succession to the English Crown. The victory of La Hogue had enabled him to confine his attention to the continent without feeling anxiety for the land of his adoption. But England's great Mediterranean trade route passed through waters where the French sea-board dominated it. Her Navy could not blockade Toulon for ever, and during a temporary absence the Toulon fleet might slip away, link itself with the fleet of Brest, and reproduce the panic of the year of Beachy Head.

On the other hand, Louis' juggling with the Brest and Toulon fleets savoured of stale-mate. It might balk the English of the well-earned fruits of victory, but it did not materially aid the French, who were faced on shore by the old insoluble difficulty, to wit, the whole of the European armies acting at the volition of a single conning-tower, the mind of William of Orange. With England in front, Spain in the rear, and the Empire on his flank, what could Louis do! He still hoped to extend his kingdom to the Rhine, but he was too evidently unable to do so without an ally.

In the quiet nights that followed Ryswick Louis must often have dreamed that his affability had detached Austria or Spain from William's zone of friendship; and William, that Tangier was won again with a battle-fleet harboured beneath its guns.

Ruthlessly intruding itself on the consideration of princes came the question of the succession to the throne of Spain.

When Charles II succeeded his father Philip IV in the year of

Lowestoft, he was a poor sickly child, weakly in body and not too strong in mind. Men prophesied that he would never reach manhood; but when William ousted James II. he had consoled himself for the loss of his first wife by taking to himself a second. In 1697 he had fallen into the last stages of invalidism, and his death was looked for at any time. His heritage still included Spain, the Netherlands [Belgium], the New World, the Balearic Isles, Sicily and Sardinia, the duchy of Milan, and Italy south of the Papal States; but he had no child.

The failure of heirs male was a matter of vital importance to England. If France, whose position at Toulon had already made things so uncomfortable, were to win the Spanish inheritance, she would enclose the western sea from Palermo to Genoa, from Genoa to Toulon, from Toulon to Malaga. She would also gain all that she had fought for in the Channel. She would obtain a sea-board to the north of the Straits of Dover; her boundary would be carried to the Rhine; and Antwerp would take the place of London as the emporium of the world. This theme was not imaginary. The wretched Charles had only two near relatives of consequence, the Emperor and Louis himself.

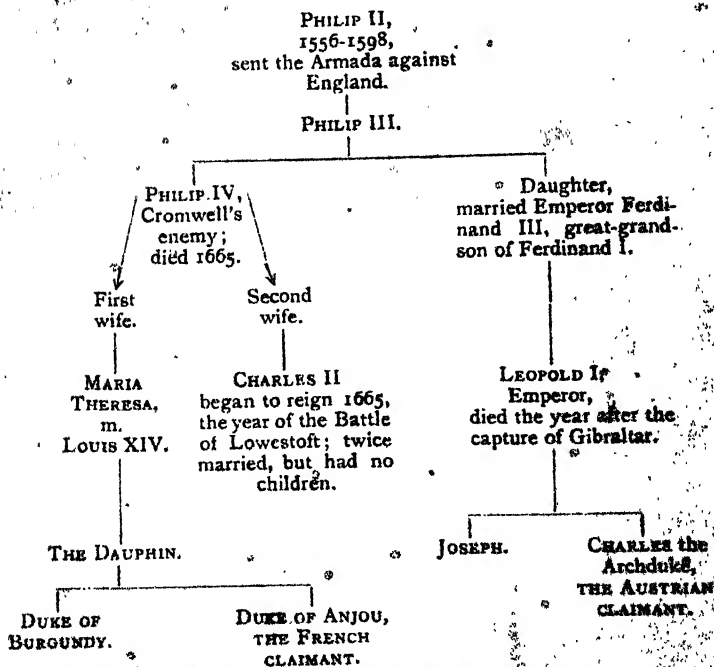
With all his ambition Louis did not in his wildest moments dream of annexing the whole Spanish Empire. He had been thwarted in all his attempts to take that smaller part which he considered rightfully his own; any further attempts could but lead to a renewal of universal opposition. He was determined to get as much as he could, but he would act with circumspection, and accept with gracious discretion whatever was allotted as his share.

So came about the famous Partition Treaties whereby in effect William, with consent expressed or implied, carved up the Spanish Empire among the several claimants. He safeguarded the interests of his Dutch and English subjects by stipulating that under no circumstances should the Netherlands fall to France; and by insisting also that the same sceptre should not hold sway either over Spain and France, or over Spain and her Italian possessions south of the Papal States. In this way he hoped to maintain the existing state of things in the Channel and establish an equipoise in the Western Mediterranean.

The Partition Treaties were very subtle; but they had the effect of goading the Spaniards to madness. Their one anxiety, a very

natural one, was to maintain the Spanish Empire in its completeness indivisible. Their sentiments found no better representative than Charles II, who resolved to leave his possessions whole and intact to whomsoever he would. The Dauphin of France was his sister's son, and a suitable king of Spain, but to leave the Spanish Empire to the Dauphin would be to merge it in the title-deeds of France. This suited him not at all. But the Dauphin had two sons and the younger would serve his turn.

A claim no less cogent and insinuating could be preferred by the Emperor who was himself the grandson of Philip III. His own exalted position made him unsuitable as a candidate; but he also had two sons. The Duke of Anjou or the Archduke Charles?



When Maria Theresa married, the Spaniards engaged that the Princess should renounce her claim to the Crown of her father. Crafty Mazarin agreed, but arranged that the renunciation should only hold good when the indemnity he demanded was paid. The indemnity was large and difficult to raise, and the French wisely did not press the matter.

The dying King weighed their respective merits; and with his latest breath bequeathed the crown to his nephew the Duke of Anjou [Nov. 1701].

By all the unbroken vows Louis had bound himself to abide by the most sacred treaty; but the prospect was too alluring. He decided to accept the will. Can he be blamed? He had sworn in the presence of his friends not to pick the tempting fruit, to wait until the time was ripe and share the harvest with his friends; when, lo, the fruit itself had fallen to his grandson. He had kept his vow; had he not? Suppose his grandson were resolute to keep what providence bestowed, was it any part of his duty to chastise his flesh and blood because they were dear to Fortune? Was this in the bond? "Messieurs, voici le roi d'Espagne!"

The maritime nations were bitterly disappointed, but they were obliged to accept the situation with a good grace. It was otherwise with Austria. How could she accept so heavy a blow with equanimity! Louis did not even frame the question, still less concern himself with an answer. He was a match for Austria alone; and now, now at last, he had the ally of his dreams. France had been girt about with foes north, south and east; now she would entertain friends on either side. France had been exhausted by her load of war; now the Peruvian mines would pour into her lap innumerable rubies. Louis was sixty-five years of age, but he felt his youth come back. He was invulnerable now, and capable of all. Of course it would have been more satisfactory if all had been gathered under a single crown: but that would come. He would announce that his grandson's acceptance of the Spanish Crown would not debar him from succession to the French. Would his enemies swallow that! "Messieurs, il n'y a plus de Pyrénées." Yes; his enemies swallowed even that. But they were becoming infuriated. Tired though they were of fighting against him, the English now itched to be at him again. But they had no cause of quarrel. The spirits of Louis leapt higher. His presumption exceeded the bounds of license. He was ready to fling discretion to the winds. At such a moment James II died [Sept. 1701], and Louis from warmth of heart and wanton generosity declared his son to be James III, the rightful King of England. This was a direct contravention of the terms of Ryswick;

this was for England and the result. William III drew the sword, and amid the cheers of his army, he threw away the scabbard.*

Had England been free from continental entanglements, the War of the Spanish Succession might have been not only one of the most brilliant but also of the most remunerative of wars. The Spanish Indies, Brazil and Panama, provided a vista of conquest sufficiently attractive. But England could not tear herself from her old friends to play a selfish part. The Low Countries called for her protecting arm, and to secure the active friendship of Austria she accepted the claims of the Austrian candidate for the throne of Spain. The land campaigns produced a Marlborough, but their expense starved the fleet, and the task of propping up the throne of the *soi-disant* Charles III fettered its action and limited its field.

VIGO BAY

OCTOBER 12, 1702

On the outbreak of war Rooke, now the acknowledged head of the British Navy, found himself in command of a splendid Anglo-Dutch fleet numbering no less than fifty battleships. He knew who were the enemies of his country; he knew how to meet them if they offered him the chance; but the position of affairs for all that was distracting. If the fleet was to support the Austrian candidate, it was necessary to establish friendly relations with Spain. But the fleet could not operate off the coast of Spain without a base; and if it helped itself rudely to a base in Spain, it could hardly establish friendly relations. Something had to be done, a beginning made somewhere. The thoughts of all slipped into an Elizabethan groove, and it was resolved that the victor of La Hogue should repeat the achievement of Howard, and exact as a forced loan the sea-girt walls of Cadiz.

Rooke hoisted his flag in the *Royal Sovereign*, not the historic first three-decker, but a daughter. The mother-ship had been accidentally destroyed by fire, but certain precious planks salvaged from the conflagration had been woven into the new vessel, recently launched by His Grace of Marlborough. Rooke chose as

* Although he had made all the preparations, William did not live to conduct the war.

his second-in-command [redacted] had been with him, at Londonderry, and [redacted] Beachy Head and Barfleur, and now [redacted] George. The expedition included a vast [redacted] and supernumerary vessels which carried [redacted] 1000 under the Duke of Ormonde, whose soldierly qualities had been tested at Sedgemoor, Royn Water and Steenkette.

Cadiz was reached in August, 1702, but hardly had Cape Rota been sighted before things began to go wrong. It was early made evident that the Austrian claimant had no adherents in the neighbourhood. Therefore if the town were taken at all, it would have to be taken by force; and force would not conciliate those in whose interests the English were supposed to be acting. There was no chance of re-winning the fame of Drake who had scattered the shipping in the outer harbour and destroyed an armada in the inner, because the amount of shipping in both was insignificant. Again, the town itself was so strongly fortified, so stoutly held, and so well prepared that the tactics of Essex did not commend themselves to the Duke of Ormonde. Accordingly a third alternative was adopted, which in practice recalled some of the least desirable features of the barren campaign of 1625.

The army was landed on the side of the harbour opposite to Cadiz, and began working its way southward. Santa Catalina and Santa Maria fell, but an endeavour to dominate the Punta Passage from the eastern side was temporarily repulsed. The Duke demanded Rooke's assistance, but it was not easy for the Admiral to do anything but bombard the town from the sea; and what good could come of it with the Duke on the other side of the bay! Such violent wooing accorded ill with the gentle nature of his secret instructions; and as the Austrian agent on board the *Royal Sovereign* pointed out, the harm done to his master's cause by the indignation of the citizens would outweigh any value the place might afford as a base for the British fleet. The situation was intolerable, and much to the Duke's chagrin, the Admiral insisted that the enterprise should be immediately abandoned.

Rather more than a month was spent at Cadiz, and the expedition, a little out of conceit with itself, turned northwards in the third week of September. Moodily they sailed along the coast, and when the majority had already weathered Cape St. Vincent,

certain of the transports were lying at Lagos under the charge of Captain [unclear]. There among others there went ashore [unclear] sailors, who not only could speak French but were of French descent. This led to quite a friendly conversation with the French Consul, who was delighted to have some one with whom to converse. A certain amount of banter and good-humoured chaff was indulged in. The Consul probably said: "Well, you haven't defeated a French fleet this time;" and the Chaplain, "That's because you haven't got a fleet for us to defeat." "Aha! haven't we!" replied the Consul, "you little know; one that you would have loved to catch, but safe now, safe in Vigo Bay." *

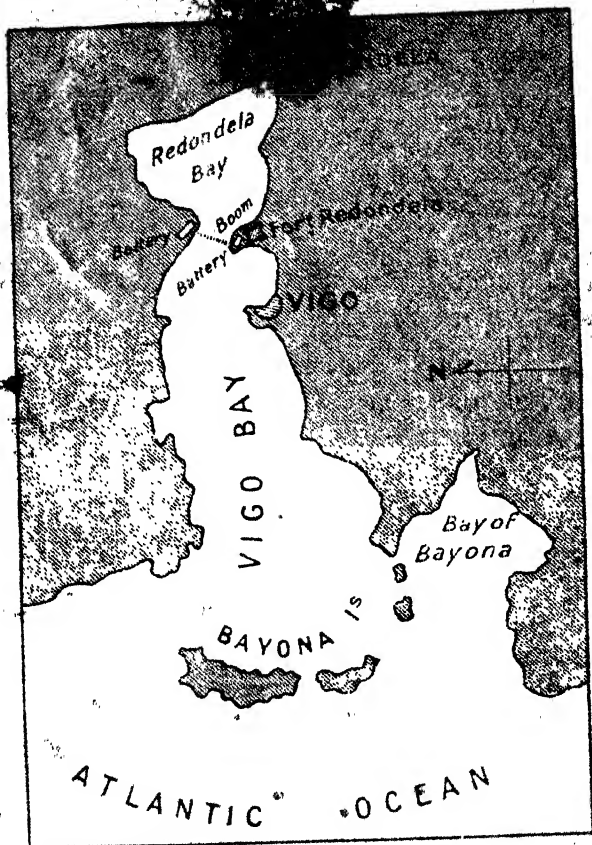
When the war broke out it had been Louis' first anxiety to secure at all hazards the Spanish Plate-fleet then collecting in the New World. Not only was the fleet in question the largest and richest that had ever left the Main, but the war itself depended on its safe arrival. It was essential that Louis should stock his coffers, for Colbert's foundation of gold had crumbled away, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes had exiled the industries of France. It was essential to stock them at once, for the English command of the sea made the future uncertain. Louis had accordingly despatched Châteaurenault of Bantry across the Atlantic with a fleet of twenty-four ships. The Admiral was not a brilliant man but he knew his business, and there was every chance that he would convey his riches to the feet of Louis because he could put into any Atlantic port from Brest to Cadiz. In England an opinion prevailed that one of these two was certain to be used, and as Rooke was at Cadiz, Shovel was sent to blockade Brest.

Early in September Châteaurenault, who had probably received word in the Azores as to the disposition of the English fleets, ran into Vigo Bay skilfully eluding both.

Vigo Bay is an inlet on the north-west coast of Spain. It is deeply cleft, and its eastern extremity is twenty miles removed from the Atlantic. At its entrance the isles of Bayona shield it from the violence of the ocean gales. The town itself is on the southern shore of the bay facing the dawn. Eastward and beyond the channel narrows to less than a mile in width, and again reopens into Redondela harbour. Into the very farthest recesses of the gulf, and under the protection of Redondela Fort,

Châteaurenault withdrew his seventeen priceless galleons and twenty-four fighting ships.

As Vigo was strongly garrisoned, he could draw upon it for



VIGO BAY

October 12, 1702

soldiers to any extent, but he did not rest content with a fort and battery on the south side of the narrows and a battery on the north. Had Forts Lisset and St. Vaast saved the situation at La

Hogue? He constructed a boom thirty feet in girth of masts, yards, cables, top-chains, planks and casks. This he moored in the waterway and anchored securely. At either end he stationed a 70-gun ship, and within he drew up five others of similar armament in position broadside on. Behind this formidable barrier the galleons began to move with a feeling akin to security.

Meanwhile Master Beauvoir had confided his news to Captain Hardy who weighed immediately and sped after the Admiral. Storm and fog alike retarded progress, and far too many pieces of eight had been taken ashore ere Captain Hardy could give St. George his splendid piece of news. The Admiral was struggling with a bout of sickness, but a harbour full of ships after the barrenness of Cadiz was enough to restore him to health. The season of the year was unpropitious, but the fog at least befriended his approach, and he reached the harbour unobserved. Here his dispositions were perfected. It was arranged that the Duke of Ormonde should be landed on the south shore and work his way against the formidable fort which frowned on Redondela Bay. All the boats of the fleet were assembled, a landing effected, and 5,000 troops advanced. As a matter of fact there were double the number of soldiers in Vigo: but they were unprepared, and the English had to efface the memory of Cadiz, and were not to be denied. So it came about that when the garrison interposed itself between the invaders and Redondela, the Duke of Ormonde brushed them from his path and swept ahead like a whirlwind. Meanwhile Rooke, realizing that the narrow limits of the bay precluded the employment of his total strength, chose from his force twenty-five ships of lighter draught. He himself shifted his flag from the *Royal Sovereign* to the *Somerset*, and Sir Thomas Hopsonn from the *Prince George* to the *Torbay*.^{*} To the *Barfleur* and the *Association* he assigned the work of dealing with the batteries on the north and south. The remainder of the ships were to be drawn up in line abreast, five in a line, with Admiral Hopsonn as their leader. On the night of the 11th Rooke paid a personal visit to each of the twenty-five, and to each company he spoke words of explanation, encouragement and exhortation.

On the 12th when the British flag on Fort Redondela con-

^{*} This ship commemorated of course the successful expedition of William III.

veyed, and that the Duke had been as good as his word, and that for the first time before, the fleet was merely tremendous and no longer impossible. Sir George gave the word and the twenty-first elected stood in. The boom of closer acquaintance proved a horrible erection. Hopsonn was convinced that it would prove impassable, but Rooke assured him that though impervious to all else, it would yield to Thomas Hopsonn. The bar was cleft at the impact of the *Torbay*, and Admiral Hopsonn found himself girt about with enemies; but the severed fragments of the boom resolved themselves into lock-gates and proved a greater encumbrance than ever. For long the brave *Torbay* drew upon herself the fire of all. Stormed at starboard and larboard by the lock-keepers, the *Bourbon* and the *Espérance*, raked by the batteries on shore, her casualties were horrifying, and the damage above board threatened to reduce the dauntless ship to a sheer bulk.

To complete her discomfiture Châteaurenault launched a fireship. Not having the genuine article with him he had improvised one out of a cargo-boat. The *Torbay* was hardly in a position to deal with any further enemies. Her masts were shattered. Sails and rigging lay by the board tempting the flames. The *Torbay* caught fire and her dread antagonist burnt downwards to the powder. A muffled explosion rent the air, and the fireship burst sunder like a colossal puff-ball. Her cargo was a cargo of snuff. Scattered in every direction, it reduced many to such an agony that they cast themselves overboard; but it proved itself also the best of fire-extinguishers, and saved from destruction the very ship whose doom it had threatened.

While the *Torbay* was selling her life dearly, stout hearts behind were hacking a way through the boom with hatchet, axe and crowbar. Rescue was coming slowly but surely; the ships assigned for that purpose were entertaining the shore batteries as fully as they could; and ever the flag on Redondela Fort urged strong men to redouble their efforts. At last the gap appeared, and as fresh ships pressed forward through the chink, the noble protagonist withdrew her shattered timbers from the fray, while her gallant commander with appetite unsated shifted his flag to the *Monmouth* and returned.

Robbed of his defences, denuded of his boom, Châteaurenault

decided that there was nothing further to be done. The same breeze that bore the enemy upon him frustrated his chance of escape: his sure retreat was changed into a death-trap. Much of his priceless cargo still remained in the ships, and must not be allowed to fall into alien hands, nor must the warships grace an English triumph. His mind was made up: he would burn his ships. The notification was made with what rapidity circumstances would allow. But Rooke was too quick. With nimble skill he took for England thirteen battleships, and many a galleon fell into his hand. At break of day Châteaurenault had a fleet of forty-one: by eventide they were gone; prisoner or perished every ship of them. The victory was decisive; the enemy were annihilated as completely as the Spaniards by the thunderstroke of Blake at Santa Cruz.

When all was over Rooke called for Captain Hardy, the courier of glad tidings, and with a grim humour that he loved, addressed him. "You have done," he said, "a very important piece of service. You have added to the honour and riches of your country by your diligence. But don't you know that you are liable to be shot for leaving your station?" With modest heat the gallant Captain "He is unworthy to bear a commission under Her Majesty who holds his life as anything when the glory and interest of his country require him to hazard it." The Admiral's face relaxed into that smile which so well became him. He handed Captain Hardy a missive for Her Majesty. In due course the letter was delivered. The good Queen read the news and the kindly recommendation of the servant at her feet. "Rise, Sir Thomas Hardy," she said, and gave him the flag that he deserved.

Had Rooke's onslaught followed more swiftly upon Châteaurenault's appearance in the bay, wealth beyond the dreams of avarice might have swelled the triumph. As it was, considerably more than £2,000,000 was taken, and all the gold coins minted in 1703 were struck with the word *Vigo* to show the mine whence they were dug. The Government ran counter to the good old proverb that deprecates too close an examination of a gift-horse. When the *Vigo* galleons presented a peace-offering fragrant enough to satisfy the most exacting, they insisted on an enquiry into the failure at Cadiz. Rooke emerged from the enquiry with reputation unspotted, and was by the Queen created a *Baron*

Councillor. Ormonde was made Viceroy of Ireland. Hopsonn received a knighthood. The officers and men were rewarded in a pleasant and tangible fashion. One of the streets in London Town was christened Vigo Street: and so all ended happily.

THE TAKING OF GIBRALTAR

JULY 23-24, 1704

England was still faced by the old difficulty. The Vigo campaign had contributed little to solve the outstanding problem of the leading maritime power. True, the King of Portugal had received an object-lesson: and the haste he showed to abandon Louis and join the Augsburg ring put Lisbon at the disposal of the allies. As a temporary resting-place, a haven in which to water and careen, it was not to be despised; but the war was not against a power whose ships plied from Mexico to Spain, or Spain to the Azores. Unlike Cadiz, Lisbon was of little use as a base for the Mediterranean.

Tangier would have exactly answered England's requirement: and whatever may be thought of its abandonment, failure to appreciate its value must not be assigned as the cause. Its advantages had instantly been recognized. Although it afforded little protection against the weather, although it was very much at the mercy of the Arabs behind it, although a mint of money was required for its improvement, Charles II, acting under the trusty advice of Albemarle, resolved at his accession to abandon Dunkirk, then a recent acquisition, in order to lavish his all upon Tangier. £2,000,000 were spent upon the mole alone: warfare with the Arabs caused an incessant drain: but Charles stuck to the position with commendable constancy, and for twenty-three years his possession proved an excellent check to Louis and a splendid nursery for British seamen. When in his impecunious latter days he found himself obliged to part with it, he did so with unfeigned regret; and the evacuation committee headed by Mr. Pepys met with vigorous opposition not only from the Earl of Torrington, but from two other seamen, little enough known in those days, Cloudisley Shovel and Rooke.

A biased reader may ask himself to what grade in the peerage Rooke was raised had the politics of a Tory M.P. proved less detestable.

Their prescience had been amply illustrated in the war of the English Succession. A squadron acting from Tangier might well have prevented the concentration that led to Beachy Head, and would certainly have prevented the accident to the Smyrna convoy. But Tangier was irreclaimable. The shattered mole lay broadcast at the bottom of the harbour; and the bastions, looking southward, all were down.

And now the need of the place was more urgent than ever. 1704 was to be the critical year of the struggle. Louis was determined to hurl his force upon the Emperor and in a single campaign overwhelm him once for all. Marlborough, determined that he should not do so, was planning the brilliant move, whereby his Low Country army massed upon the Upper Danube was with a crushing blow to fling back the armies of France as they marched against Vienna. With genius unsurpassed for strategy "he taught the doubtful battle where to rage." Paris, Brussels and Vienna were for him but landmarks on a single battlefield. But the grandeur of his conception did not blind him to its difficulty. He needed help. He required the attention of the foe to be relaxed, or drawn entirely apart by a feint in another direction. This could best be done by the opportune appearance of an armament at Toulon. The port was for the moment the very centre of the theatre of war: it commanded the routes to all the Spanish possessions in the Mediterranean. An occupation of Toulon would cut off the French in Italy from the French in Spain. A permanent occupation would rob France of her portcullis, her water-gate, her chiefest entrance way. A fleet acting from Toulon would menace Barcelona, Genoa and Naples. Its influence would be dominant. Send but the victor of Vigo to the port of Toulon, and the success of the Danube scheme was assured!

Rooke may be pardoned if he was a little disappointed. He himself preferred the crushing blow, and cared little for the misleading feint. He was ready to admit that a strong fleet in the Mediterranean would have a marked effect, but could a fleet be strong which operated from a base 2,000 miles away? He had played the Toulon part before and knew its weaknesses.

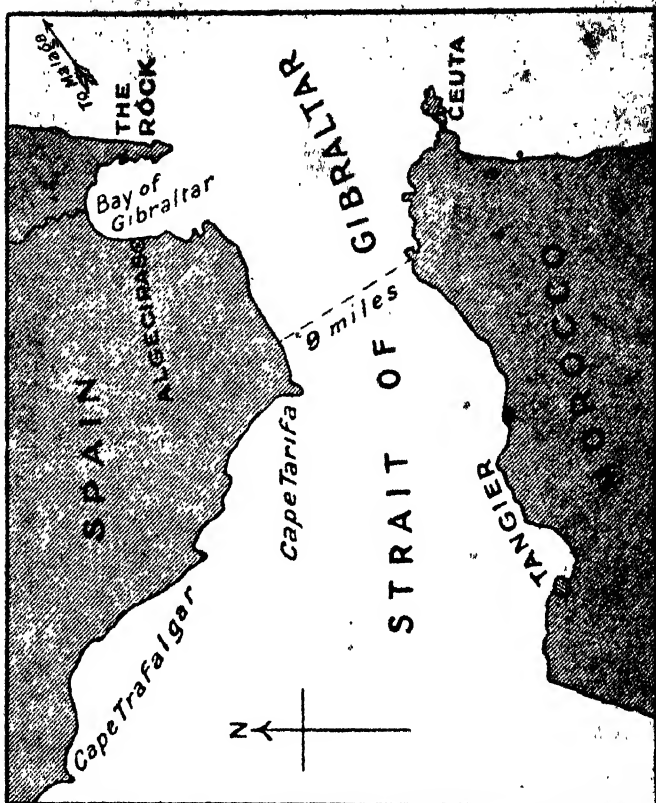
Rooke left England on his memorable cruise at the end of February, 1704. He was a little uneasy, for he knew of Brest unguarded and within its recesses prepared.

advanced for the equipment of a squadron under the Comte de Toulouse [1678-1737], a son of the Grand Monarque. Sir Clowdisley should have been there, but was still at home when Rooke himself had started.

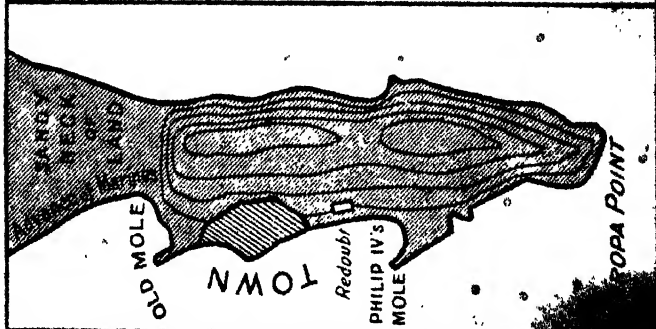
The Admiral's anxiety was only too well founded. Towards the end of May he heard that Toulouse had escaped and was making for the Straits. Not desiring to be caught between the upper and nether millstones, Rooke stood away from Toulon to seek his new adversary. The two fleets met, but Toulouse declined battle, showed Rooke a clean pair of heels and slipped into port. His combination with the fleet already blockaded made it inadvisable for Rooke to risk an engagement in his enfeebled condition. He therefore stood down towards the Straits, feeling sure he could rely upon Sir Clowdisley to make all possible speed. The brother Admirals met and their united fleets numbered some sixty sail. Rooke had as his second in command Admiral John Leake, whom he had selected to break the boom at Derry, into whose ship he had shifted his flag in order to compass the destruction of the French at La Hogue. Sir Clowdisley brought with him a Dutch contingent, and as his second in command Kentish George Byng, who had wooed the sailors of James from their allegiance, and had worked his way to flag-rank by his handling of the *Hope* at Beachy Head and the *Royal Oak* at Barfleur.

The Admirals met near Lagos; and as they worked their way back towards the Straits, the subject of their conference can easily be guessed. The theme was threadbare, but of matchless interest. Were they never on these long-distance runs to find rest for the soles of their feet? Were the French always to tire them out by dodging in and out of Brest and Toulon? Were they always to act at a disadvantage? At any moment the fleets in Toulon might return newly provisioned, freshly scraped. And themselves? They must stay juddling about in the Straits daily growing fouler; or retiring to Lisbon for necessities, allow Toulouse to slip past, and force them home by a retaliatory seint upon the Channel. As they passed Tangier they experienced a feeling of acute irritation very natural under the circumstances.

beside them was the Rock of Gibraltar; to the south the Pillars of Hercules, twin gatepost with Ceuta beyond with its Fortunate Isles; to the modern



GIBRALTAR AND VICINITY



a finger-post to the Orient, a milestone on the way to the Levant. No Cadiz this with harbour visited by Tyne of old: just a rock, a foothold from the sea. But what a rock! Three miles in length, three parts of a mile in breadth, and 1,400 feet high: sheer precipice on the eastern side, sloping to sea-level on the west: not to be scaled on the east or north, with difficulty on the south: meet emblem of Britain, a lion couching in the waves.

Fortified at the beginning of the eighth century by the Saracen Tarik, who led from Africa the Moslem conquerors of Spain, Gibraltar had remained for seven hundred years a Moorish stronghold with a breakwater for ships. Passing to the Spaniards on the downfall of Granada its qualities were quickly recognized, and the fortifications of Charles V were supposed to render the place impregnable. Britain had already cast wistful eyes upon it. Cromwell had hoped that Blake would capture it, and convert it into an island by a canal dug through the sandy neck that joins the Rock to Spain. Cromwell's enemy, Philip IV, was resolute to keep it. He had done much for the place, and had constructed a New Mole to the southward of the town to augment the limited accommodation of the old.

Fourteen miles of sea separate Gibraltar from its twin column in the south, and westward the channel narrows to nine before the north coast curves away to Trafalgar. In so strait a path a thousand might well be stopped by three, and the rock-shadowed bay though exposed to the south-west allowed an anchorage by no means despicable.

It is not certain who revived the idea of capture upon the present occasion. Claimants for the honour are Admiral Leake and the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, who was with the fleet as military adviser, and representative of the Austrian candidate. The suggestion was warmly welcomed by Rooke, and icily received by others, whose sentiments were voiced by Admiral Byng. Their hesitation confirmed Rooke in his resolve, and with a twinkle in his eye he assigned the command of the attacking force to the leader of the opposition. The hazard of the attempt was undoubtedly immense. Even if successful, there was no means of knowing how long the attack might last, and the combined fleet of might appear upon the scene, brimful of ammunition at the English supply was running out. Rooke took

the responsibility, and as usual made faultless dispositions. He detached a squadron of twenty-two ships to be drawn up within firing distance of the town from the Old Mole to a point where now the dockyard hums with its own peculiar music. Ten ships under Admiral Byng formed the centre, while smaller divisions of six formed van and rear. Rooke himself took command of the rest. To the mouth of a diminutive river, which Gibraltar Bay receives in its northern fold, he then escorted a band of 1,800 men under the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt.* This done he assumed the rôle of general direction and paternal vigilance which he understood so well. He had good reason to suppose that the garrison was not invincible, but he might at any moment be called upon not only to shield the inshore squadron from the onslaught of Toulouse, but also to rescue from the clutch of reinforcements (even now hastening to the garrison's relief), the little army which was marching over the neck of land to attack the north-west quarter of the town.

Byng opened his attack at daylight on 23rd July, and shortly afterwards a stream of fugitives was seen scurrying southwards: the women, as it proved, making for sanctuary at the shrine of Our Lady of Europa. The bombardment continued unceasingly till midday when Rooke called for relaxation in order to take cognizance of damage done. He sent a small ship all along the line to gather reports of progress, and his messenger arriving at the ships to southward learned that they had silenced the battery opposed to them. Their captains suggested landing in boats, and without awaiting permission at once set out.

On reaching the South Mole head some of the party rushed into the battery with matches burning, and fired unwittingly the powder-magazine. A hideous explosion followed, killing forty outright and wounding sixty more. Everything suggested that a mine had been sprung, and at the thought something like panic ensued. But Rooke's leave by this time had been obtained, and all the boats of the fleet rushed forward with the same impetuosity as at La

* A body of Marines had been raised during the later Dutch Wars, but these were merely regiments raised for service in ships. The 'free soldiers and sailors too' were raised in 1702, and established a grateful recollection of their countrymen by their exemplary conduct in the present campaign.

Hogue. The South Mole was taken, and the fort commanding it: so likewise a battery which commanded a road leading northwards from the Mole to the town. The development of the attack had isolated the women to the south, and the poor Governor, who had 100 guns facing the bay, but only the same number of regulars at his command, could raise scarcely 500 troops to defend the place. Attacked by the Marines from the north and by seamen from the south, and separated from the more fragments of the community, he agreed to a capitulation. He was to surrender the Rock "to its lawful sovereign King Charles VI. if at the end of the war the English had established their nominee upon the throne of Spain, they would have been obliged to restore Gibraltar to the Austrian, whose claims they had supported. Meanwhile the plucky little garrison marched out with the honours of war, and the Rock was lost and won.

Attempts have been made time and again to belittle this great achievement. It has been urged that the task was so childishly simple. Any one could have done it. The same plea was put forward by the supercilious and hypercritical when Columbus returned from America. But if it was so easy a task, then the same opportunity offers again to-day. This may readily be granted with one proviso. The intending captor should like Rooke take one precaution. He should be careful to burn, sink or destroy all the ships on whom the Rock must rely for its ultimate safety. It is not strictly true to say that Rooke had done this, for there was still a fleet in being to the eastward. But even so, the credit is still more assuredly his, for he acted in the scorn of consequence. To urge the smallness of the garrison is an unnecessary reflection on the enemy. Did not the Chevalier Bayard hurl back hundreds standing astride upon a bridge! The rock was worthy of heroes and has bred them since. If the numbers had been fifty times as great Rooke would not for that have hesitated.

Happily no one attempts to belittle the magnitude of England's gain. Gibraltar gave England that foothold in the Mediterranean which was so vital to her interests. Henceforward England bestrode the greatest trade route in the world, and held the key of the only gate to the Sea of History. Since 1704 she has been called upon to defend her claim, and stoutly she has fought. If need arose, she would do so again: Gibraltar is an integral part of the

Empire, and more to be desired than much gold. Let it not be forgotten lastly that this slip of Spain was taken in war with France, for the significance of this can scarcely be exaggerated. A fleet based on Gibraltar interposes a sluice-gate between French naval ports in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

If all else that Rooke did were forgotten, if all that his fiercest enemy said were true, yet would the capture of Gibraltar entitle him to a place among the stars.

THE BATTLE OF MALAGA

AUGUST 13, 1704

The chivalrous feelings of all true Frenchmen were stirred to their depths by the news. Spain had suffered in the French cause and France must restore her prestige. Louis also, whatever it might cost, was determined to get Gibraltar back again. For him Spanish prestige was as nothing compared with the new embarrassment to his arms. The fleet in Toulon must engage Rooke's attention, while an army advancing over the neck of land accounted for the miserable garrison which the Englishman had thrown upon the Rock. Miserable garrison! Louis had still to make the acquaintance of the British Marines.

Cheerfully emerging from Toulon the Comte de Toulouse stood down to the Straits as fully determined as his father to recapture the Rock or learn the reason why. The composition of his fleet was peculiar and calls for remark. In addition to fifty-one ships of the line, he had no less than twenty great galleys. These could of course act only as auxiliaries, but so long as the combatants were equally matched their services might prove invaluable, for they could supply motive-power to the lamed, ammunition to the flagging, and reinforcements to the decimated. If one ship or two were forced from the line, half a dozen of them could throw themselves quickly into the gap from whatever direction the wind might blow. In the event of a debacle such as Scheveningen, St. James's Day or La Hogue, they would probably prove as useful as the Genoese crossbowmen at Crécy.

Leaving his fleet of galleys at Malaga, Toulouse held on for the Straits to reconnoitre the enemy's position. On sighting the Englishmen he instantly fell back to pick up the remainder of his

force. For the allies his manoeuvres were an intensely comic air. Could it be that the Brest and Toulon fleets had united in order that they might avoid battle? It certainly seemed so, for here was the Count taking a peep at them, and then scuttling away. Rooke sent to Gibraltar for half the Marines, distributed them among the fleet, and then, so anxious for Gibraltar, brightest jewel in his crown, took such heart as the French appeared to despair.

Toulouse had begun well. Without the least intention to deceive, he had misled his opponents in the same way that the Conqueror lured Harold to his doom at Senlac. The English had to defend Gibraltar to the death, and were actually being enticed away from their post! Rooke did his best to find his elusive foe. Sweeping northwards and southwards he sought him, but no glimpse of a sail rewarded his search. One thing was certain. He could not go far in chase and leave Gibraltar to fend for herself. The fleet went about and returning with the east wind discovered to their horror that Toulouse had slipped in between them and the coast, and now occupied the very position which was by duty theirs. He lay between them and the rock that they had won. He meant to fight; and to allow him to remain where he was would be a tacit admission of defeat.

Rooke had been obliged to part with some of his ships after the capture of Gibraltar, but in the matter of battleships he still outnumbered his adversary by a narrow margin of two. He had of course no galleys; and if it be argued that these were only a supply train, it was exactly in respect of supplies that Rooke had reason to mistrust his strength. The bombardment of the rock had not exhausted his firing capacity, but had seriously impaired it. More than six months had passed since the fleet left England, and before undertaking any further action of importance, Rooke needed a visit to a friendly dockyard. The gloomy outlook was not improved by the presence in the French fleet of ten three-deckers more than the English could muster.

Rooke in the *Royal Catherine* commanded the centre of his line, and was seconded by Byng in the *Ranelagh*. Sir Cloudesley led the van in the *Barfleur* with Leake as his second in the *Prince George*. The Dutch brought up the rear.

The battle was to be a battle not to establish the reputation of Rooke—that was not in doubt; not a great trial of strength—

there was no need of such with La Hogue and Vigo fresh in the remembrance. The battle was a battle for Gibraltar, and both sides knew it well. The English had to smash their way through to the west; or so belabour their adversaries that they could no longer maintain their position. Everything depended on their power to smite, and they were short of ammunition.

The fortune of war had set the defenders in a posture of offence. The position was false and unnatural, but the Comte de Toulouse was not more comfortable. He had set his lance in rest. He had dared his foes to fight. It was he who had issued the challenge. To gain Gibraltar he must throw a winning hazard. He must evolve some tactical advantage which would leave no doubt as to who was the winner. He must in fact win a Beachy Head: crush, nay pulverize, the allied van; and then as the English slunk away to Lisbon, harass their rear; and returning, recapture the Rock and garrison it strongly. The Count recognized this, and discovered with dismay that the English had stolen the wind from him. This was quite as unintentional on their part as his interposition between the Rock and its defenders. The antagonists had accidentally usurped each other's place.

D'Estrées fils, the lover of books, was naval adviser on board the French flagship. He had commanded the rear at Beachy Head, was an experienced seaman, and well versed in the traditions of the Tourville school. He gave his commander-in-chief his best advice, and recommended him to double on the English van as Châteaurenault had done on that glorious day in 1690. Had the galleys been battleships, had Toulouse possessed seventy-one of the line to the English fifty-three, the glory of Beveziers might have been renewed.

As the allied fleet bore down in line abreast, the French attempted to double on their van. Sir Cloudisley with his practised eye immediately saw the danger, and spread out his line in a lateral direction to counteract this show of skill. In doing so he lost touch with Sir George, and there appeared a gap in the English line between the centre and its wing. With such an opportunity Albemarle and his disciples would have attempted to divide the enemy's fleet by tacking through their line. D'Estrées with all the science at his finger-tips was quick to point out the opportunity, and Toulouse no slower to act upon it. Rooke was

not yet in position, but there was not a moment to be lost. He clapped his squadron upon a wind, ran out his guns, and engaged the advantage-seekers at the extremest limit of his range. Happily his broadsides reached their mark, and the French abandoned their attempt. The first round was over, and fencing with it. The English skill had secured an equal grip. Van to van, centre to centre, rear to rear the two sides clutched each other for a fall.

The Dutch in the rear had a good stock of ammunition and fought well as they always did. Sir Clowdisley and Leake performed prodigies of valour in the van. The centre told a different tale. Here were the very pick of the French, here was the Count himself panting for glory, and here the English ships were for the most part those that had spent their powder on the Rock. As the day wore on more ships than one were obliged to leave the line. Their departure left perilous intervals, and threw additional labour on those remaining whose ammunition could not be expected to stand the strain. Rooke fought as he had never fought before, but the match was too uneven to last. And now that fine seaman Sir Clowdisley gave a new exposition of his ready skill.

Just as Cromwell at Marston Moor drove from the field the wing opposed to him, and then turned upon his enemies' victorious centre, so Shovel breaking the back of the opposition to himself backed astern to curb the hasty zeal of Toulouse and support Sir George in the moment of distress. The Dutch were loud in praise of both the great twin brethren. Very pleasant and lovely were they in their perfect combination.

The French fought with a splendid vigour, and ere night the casualties numbered more than 6,000, something over 3,000 on either side. Toulouse vowed he would win. He was wounded in the arm; what cared he! A little longer. They must yield. They didn't. The two fine old Admirals did not budge. Nor did the Dutch; they could not have fought better had a Tromp been there. At last the French rear gave way before them, and Toulouse, isolated by the defection of both his wings, was obliged to fall to leeward to reform. Cursing the winds he went. If he had had the weather gauge not a ship should have escaped.

Endeth the second round. Both sides had nobly fought; but, alas! the English had failed to reach Gibraltar with the wind behind them. What would they do if it failed! Hastily they dis-

tributed the insignificant remains of their ammunition and did a little patchwork; while their adversaries fell back exhausted into the comforting arms of their attendant galleys.

On the morrow the wind changed. Veering round to west, it gave Toulouse the advantage. Now what was to be done? The enemy, it was true, did not show that coming on in a position which might have been expected; but in what else did they surprise the English! Lockers empty, not a spare topmast in the fleet. Why did the enemy withhold battle? Did they mean to scorn their foes and keep on to Gibraltar? Something like Drake in default of powder had fought the Armada and Lord Grenville had stood through a thousand in contempt of them. Rooke was equal to the occasion. He would beat up to the enemy, pretend he was fully armed, and sell dearly the lives of all his ships. England demanded it. One or two might win through the French, reach Gibraltar, and reinforce the garrison. "To the death! and when hope is gone, burn to the water-line!" All day the English struggled on gamely but grimly, sick at heart, angry at their impotence. But the God of Battles had accepted Rooke's spirit of sacrifice. As night closed in, the enemy put before the wind, and at daylight not a sail of them was seen. Gibraltar was saved—saved!

It is strange to find Malaga spoken of as a drawn battle. The stake was as indivisible as it was manifest. Louis struck a medal to commemorate his success, but he struck so many for reasons so trivial that the evidence is misleading. The following instructive document suggests a reason for his numismatic zeal:—

"... the battle commenced the 24th August [N.S.] and lasted all the 26th, our fleet burning and sinking sixteen of the enemy's vessels, and taking thirty-six—among them the four flagships of England and Holland—and making prisoner the Admiral Rooch. We lost four ships. . . . The end of the remainder is momentarily expected, the Comte de Toulouse having sent a squadron to the Straits that none of the enemy may escape."

If Louis XIV believed this, it is not strange that he ordered Te Deums to be sung in all the churches, and holidays to be kept throughout the land. If, on the other hand, he presumed on a prevalent ignorance of what actually happens at sea, and brazenly practised to deceive, he at least had ample reason; for while the

great twin brethren were covering themselves with honour off the Cape of Malaga, another Castor and Pollux had carried all before them on the field of Blenheim. The victory of Marlborough and Eugene as it put an end to the terrors of Louis' age as Waterloo to that of Napoleon. The invincible legions were overthrown at last. The great image of brass had feet of clay.

Rooke suffered much during his life from the malice of envious rivals: but well might he have sought deliverance from his friends. Blenheim was a famous victory, it was resplendent, and it was intelligible even to little Peterkin; but there was no procession of captive vessels after Malaga, no marshals of France in chains. The merits of the fight did not force themselves upon the popular perception. Unhappily the Admiral's political friends endeavoured to exploit the battle for their selfish purposes. They compared it favourably with the Whig success in Bavaria. They cried it up as the finest thing that Rooke had ever done. In a sense they were right; but the Whigs in self-defence explained that two opposing fleets had met, fired at each other for a time and withdrawn by mutual consent. "A paltry affair, gentlemen, but the Admiral was a Tory. Perhaps in future it will be better to employ an officer of less pronounced views." Sure enough the Admiral of pronounced views, or rather the Admiral with injudicious admirers of pronounced views, was never again employed. It is not difficult to understand why he was shelved; but it is a cruel shame that the Whig caricature of Malaga has for so long found acceptance.

Rooke might be shelved, but his task was almost complete. The War of the Spanish Succession might continue for nine years longer, but never again would Louis allow his ships to meet Rooke's countrymen upon the sea. The English were masters of the ocean-ways and might sail where they would; might undertake a Peninsular War with the same security in which they moved when Trafalgar was won.

In 1705 Shovel co-operated with Peterborough in the capture of Barcelona, and in 1707 appeared off Toulon to act in harness with Eugene. Hearing that he was outside, the French incontinently sunk their fleet to frustrate any promptings he might feel to come within. This was excellent good if Gibraltar had been a little

more hospitable; but the Rock was flinty-hearted and offered scanty protection from the winter gales. It was therefore necessary to take the fleet into winter-quarters, and any delay in it in the Mediterranean till the autumn exposed it to the perils of the journey home. To complete Rooke's misfortune, England needed a first-class harbour in the Channel. Unfortunately she required also a first-class catastrophe to bring her this.

On 22nd October, 1707, at midday Sir Cloudesley Shovel's *Association* of ninety guns was returning from the West Indies with a squadron of twelve ships of the line. The wind blew briskly from the S.W.; and as the weather was thick and foggy, it revealed that they had passed the 100 fathom line and were in the mouth of the Channel. Shovel gave the word to lie to, and as the fog cleared. At six o'clock in the evening he ventured to put to sea, feeling certain that daylight would show their whereabouts, and before morning they were unlikely to run into danger. The Admiral was, however, fated never again to see home. In the darkness of night the *Association* struck upon "The Bishop and Clerks" off St. Mary, one of the Scilly Isles. The ship went down almost at once, and with her went 900 good men and true.

It is exceedingly difficult to account for the disaster. It is possible that the wreckers who at that time infested the islands lured the squadron to its doom by a lantern which the mariners mistook for the lighthouse of St. Agnes, the most southerly of the group. Some there are who say that the proximity of home betrayed the seafarers into a drinking bout which proved their ruin. Perhaps the most kind and at the same time the most probable explanation is that the "Rennell Current," whose waywardness was not thoroughly understood till much later, carried the seamen on its fatal waves.

The *St. George* came next to the *Association*. Her commander was Lord Dursley [afterwards Earl of Berkeley]. He was a dear bosom friend of the Admiral, to whom he had given, as a token of affectionate regard, a gorgeous emerald ring, which Shovel was wearing at the time of the accident. The *St. George* struck on the same reef as the *Association*, but the wave that dashed the first ship to pieces proved the salvation of the second. A like happy fate attended the *Phoenix*. The *Eagle* and the *Romney* went down

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

with all hands. The *Firebrand* also went down, but her captain and seventy-five of her company escaped in the boats. Admiral Boscawen, second in command of the squadron, had a miraculous escape. His presence of mind saved the situation even when the ship was under its main chains. The disaster was an appalling one for the country. Four ships, 2,000 sailors, and the country's greatest commanders 'all sunk beneath the wave.' No one knows for certain what happened to Sir Clowdisley on that night, but the most dramatic version of his end is also the most probable. According to this, Shovel finding himself in a strait, struck out with the same bold stroke that enabled him to win despatches in the Dutch War days. With the help of a hatch, which he found on the surface, he struggled on, and despite the angry ice-cold sea at last reached Porthellick Cove in St. Mary's Isle. More dead than alive he dragged himself ashore, and by some wonderful way reached a fisherman's hut, and dropped exhausted on the threshold. The fisherman and his wife may have felt the throb of pity, but they caught sight of the wonderful emerald ring, and the fortune made brutes of them. They made no effort to restore the Admiral to animation. They stripped him of his fine clothes [if he had any remaining] and buried him in the sand. When three days later a search was made for the body, they may well have aided the searchers in their work. It was another matter to change the gem into current coin of the realm. Years afterwards the pastor of Porthellick learned from the lips of a dying woman the story of her crime, and as confirmation received from her hands the priceless emerald. The jewel was forwarded to Lady Shovel, who converted it into a pendant set with diamonds and wore it as an "In Memoriam." By her will she bequeathed the jewel to Lord Berkeley, in whose family it is still a treasured possession.

Whatever the truth of the story, there is at least no doubt that Sir Clowdisley's body was recovered three days after the shipwreck, and carried to Plymouth where it was embalmed. The remains were then conveyed with much pomp to London, and buried with great magnificence in Westminster Abbey. To show her gratitude, Anne caused a handsome monument to be erected. Bird, the designer, unfortunately displayed a lamentable want of taste: and the unhappy erection has passed into a byword. Upon a wide

and roomy base or platform rise Corinthian columns, which support a classic cornice. The cornice, partially swathed in a canopy accommodates two winged Cupids holding shields. On the base and between the pillars is a sarcophagus on which the [effigy] reclines. His attitude is that of a Roman at his ease, and the illusion is heightened by the fact that Sir Cloudesley is clad in the garments of Coriolanus! Caius Marcius Coriolanus in a Louis-Quatorze wig!*

Appropriately enough it fell to Rooke's favourite to complete the master's work. After Malaga the small fleet of ships left behind to safeguard the Rock was enlarged by the arrival of Admiral Leake. Though obliged to make Lisbon his base he maintained a ubiquitous vigilance. The armies which poured southwards to achieve on land what Toulouse had failed to do by sea, sorely tried the little band of marines. The strain was growing unendurable when into the bay sailed Leake, ensladed the troops, cut the neck of land and fed the garrison. He was again compelled to withdraw and during his absence some of the besiegers took their lives after classic example and scaled the precipitous construction hung above the brave defenders by a single hair, when into the bay sailed Leake and saved the situation for the second time.

When the *Association* went down Queen Anne advanced the *saviour* of Gibraltar to fill the vacancy created by Shovel's death. Well might she say that she knew of no one better fitted to replace the ablest seaman in her service. In the year that followed the shipwreck Sir John added Minorca to the rich chaplet that adorned the Mistress of the Sea. Port Mahon is one of the finest harbours in the world, and has behind it fruitful acres which give it self-sufficiency. With its deep waters and its roomy, well-sheltered haven the island supplemented Gibraltar in the way that Malta supplements it now. Lying halfway between Cadiz and Toulon it provided an outpost for a navy militant; and put England, as a Mediterranean power, easily the first.

The possession of Gibraltar and Minorca was confirmed to England by the Peace of Utrecht [1713] which brought the War of the Spanish Succession to a close. By the terms of the same

* Cf. Addison, *Spectator*, No. 120.

treaty she monopolized the slave-trade with the Americas which continued under the Spanish Crown; and ensconced herself in the French domains of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Hudson Bay upon which her fleets had worked their own sweet will since 1690. The fortifications of Dunkirk, the home of privateers, were demolished; and though the French candidate was crowned at Madrid as Philip V, England exacted a promise that France should never be politically united. Of the remainder of the spoils, Prussia received the Polish Empire, Austria received The Netherlands, Milan, Naples, and Sicily, while Sicily was given to the family of the Bourbons. The Peace transformed the face of Europe and the sea.

Rooke only survived his great twin brother by two years. He lived an eventful life, and seen the rise and decline of a great age. Tutored by Spragge, he had Rupert and Monk as his teachers and on all occasions proved himself worthy of their names.

He may not have had the genius of Nelson, or the fire of Rodney and Hawke; but he was a great seaman and a true man.

When his country was in danger he gave her a La Hogue; when he was faced by a problem well-nigh insoluble, he won for her Gibraltar and showed her how to keep it. When she had gracefully taken all that she required and dismissed him unrewarded, he retired from public life with a humility greater than his deeds.

In an age when patriotism had lost its true ring it was natural that his fame should be decried: it was inevitable in the case of a great man who could do anything but sing his own praises. The

assault of his enemies is an unwitting testimonial. They charge him not with venality or want of principle; not with avarice or want of faith. They level their accusation in a single word, and write him down incompetent. Rooke lived through

corrupt times when men sold their reputation for money, betrayed their home, and truckled with their honour: he comes out with spotless hands unsoiled by greed, dishonesty or shame. When

he called for his solicitor and drafted his will, the worthy man of law expressed amazement that he had so little to bequeath. "I

don't leave much," replied the Admiral, "but what I leave was honestly gotten; it never cost a sailor a tear, nor the nation a

Sir George was laid to rest in Canterbury Cathedral. There is something touching in the appropriation of the finest ecclesiastical church in the kingdom to the burial-place of the nation's greatest lordliest edifice of the land fitly receives its chosen, but Canterbury is not the resting-place of the nation's greatest. England has honoured Blake, Monk, Sandwich and Nelson well; all buried at Westminster; but England can sometimes be more generous, and honour does not always fall where it is due.

Loyalty is still the same
Whether it win or lose the game
True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shone upon.

BENBOW

BORN 1653—DIED 1702

What of the bow, what of the bow?
The bow was made in England—in England

the land where the yew-tree grows.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

An invariable note of sadness seems to haunt the memory of all the great British admirals who opposed the schemes of XIV. Torrington ended an honourable career by the disastrous defeat at Beachy Head; Russell was dismissed for his victory at Barfleur; Rooke, after a long career of brilliant service, suffered a total eclipse; and Shovel perished miserably in a shipwreck. This enumeration does not exhaust the vein of tragedy, for saddest of all is the story of Benbow, whose name recalls one of the most painful and dishonourable occurrences in the history of the Navy, though, like a single star in an inky sky, the Admiral's own glory receives an added lustre from the murky darkness that encircles it.

John Benbow was the son of a tanner, who lived at Shrewsbury. According to a local tradition he was in his youth apprenticed to a butcher, and liking his task so little, cast away the blue apron and ran away to sea. Little is known of his earlier career, but it may be safely assumed that he displayed a remarkable aptitude for seamanship, and worked his way up in his chosen profession by sheer hard work, and an ability that compelled the attention of his commanders. At the age of twenty-five he was serving in the Mediterranean as master's mate, when his skill as a navigator won for him the recognition of Admiral Herbert and the full-blown dignity of master.

A year of trouble and
episode brought
little expected.

In a terrific battle the
gallantry of Captain Booth in
to secure the surrender of a dashing Algerine corsair, who
had lost a hundred killed and more than a hundred wounded;
though all her masts had gone by the board, though foot by
foot the water rose in her hold, the pirate barque continued the
struggle with unabated zeal. At the close of day, a third ship ap-
peared,—flying the Moorish flag! The darkness that enveloped
her before she could join in the fray can hardly have induced
Captain Booth to seek repose; and his frame of mind during the
night-watches must have been that of a prisoner on his way to
execution. But in the morning the stranger declared herself an
Algerine corsair; contrariwise, an English ship, the *Nonsuch*. With
insolent calmness the new arrival ran out her guns, and enforced
the surrender of the water-logged *Golden Horse*.

On board the *Nonsuch*, where Benbow was serving as a surgeon,
all agreed in treating the affair as the butt for a hundred jokes.
Some, Benbow perhaps among them, allowed their wit to outrun
their discretion, and described, to an accompaniment of hilarious
laughter, the misery of those who had failed to capture a paltry
Algerine, who had mistaken friends for enemies, who with trem-
bling limbs and blanched faces had awaited throughout a feverish
night the inevitable doom of the morrow! * Captain Booth heard
of this frivolous levity with fury and indignation. His pride was
wounded. He demanded apologies, and for some reason the en-
tire burden of guilt was fastened on the shoulders of Benbow.
Evidence is lacking. But there may have been something, besides
an unbridled tongue, that singled out the master as a scapegoat.

Benbow's character forms an interesting subject for conjecture.
He is often spoken of as a plain, blunt sailor, but there is little

* One example of Benbow's wit, ready if rough, is extant. A comrade
fighting beside him was gravely wounded, and asked the future admiral to
carry him below. Benbow shouldered the wounded man and staggered to the
cockpit, which he reached in complete ignorance that a second shot had killed
his burden outright. "What's the use of bringing that poor chap down
here?" asked the surgeon. "Why, he hasn't got a head," cried Benbow.
"The fact is," exclaimed Benbow, "he told me it was his leg that was done for."

even the most favourable bearing, uncon-
 siderable course com-
 mended by epithets might
 be ascribed to him, certain events
 were intelligible, even if the admiral for-
 ward which has been ungrudgingly
 awarded him by Sir Godfrey Kneller certainly does
 not suggest anything like

trained against or sinning, it was in consequence of the teacup
 which marred the capture of the *Golden Horse*, that
 Benbow somehow or other drifted out of the service. For
 several years nothing was heard of him, but fame had adopted
 him as a favourite godson, and ere long his name was blazoned
 forth abroad, although as skipper of a merchantman he had
 adopted a rôle somewhat lacking in the spirit of romance. While
 James II was dissipating by his Romanist tendencies the popu-
 larity he had gained at Lowestoft and Solebay, Benbow in his
 merchant ship was attacked by a Moroccan corsair who hailed
 from the port of Sallee. In a hotly contested engagement he
 displayed all the qualities of a fighting seaman, and by his skill
 and prowess achieved a smart little victory. Time and again the
 impetuous Mohammedans attempted to board, but Benbow revel-
 ling in his work drove them back with fearful carnage. At the
 conclusion of the struggle he issued orders for the decapitation
 of the infidels who had fallen in battle, and steeped the Moorish
 heads in a strong solution of salt. On arriving at a port of Spain
 he stowed his gruesome cargo in sacks, and went ashore in con-
 fident expectation of head-money. The examining magistrates
 forwarded the executioner to their King, who expressed his de-
 lighted approval of the exploit, and sent word to James, his
 brother Catholic King, to apprise him of Benbow's evident ability
 to deal with the unconverted, whether Moslem or otherwise.

To whatever extent the details of the story have been recoloured
 in the light of Benbow's subsequent career, it is at least true that
 he rejoined the Navy towards the close of James II's reign, and
 was fortunate in again coming under Admiral Herbert who had
 already shown him favour. At the Revolution of 1688 Herbert's
 immense influence secured him the command of a ship, and
 during the War of the English Succession Captain Benbow was

Controller of His Majesty's Dockyard at Deptford. From time to time his services were called upon for the performance of various duties, and his skill and dauntless courage were never in any way lessened by the simplification than in himself. Time after time he was sent to sea, at Beachy Head, again at Barfleur, and in the latter action, after Russell's victory he was entrusted with the command of a novel commission for which his genius was peculiarly suitable.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF ST. MALO

NOVEMBER 16-19, 1693

It will be remembered that after the Battle of Barfleur twenty of Tourville's ships escaped through the dangers of the Race of Alderney, and reached the inhospitable harbour of St. Malo. In his poem of *Hervé Riel*, Browning describes in spirited verse the scene enacted there. The French were desperate. Their forces were hot in pursuit, like sharks after a shoal of frightened porpoises, and the rock-bound coast opened no welcome door to mighty ships of the line. To disappoint at least an English triumph, D'Amfreville advocated the destruction of the fleet; but as he instructed his captains to run ashore, Hervé Riel, a pilot of Croisic, demanded, and gained, an audience. "Give me," he said, "your largest ship. I will undertake to guide her into port, and the rest can follow in my wake." The task seemed impossible, but the offer was accepted, and the last of the twenty found salvation as the English panted up just too late.

The French were certainly handicapped in a contest with the English by their want of a good naval base upon the Channel. St. Malo of the rocks could not be named on the same day as Plymouth, Portsmouth or Portland, any more than Dunkirk, her sister of the sandhills; but she had proved her value in an emergency, and deserved to be utilized as a secondary base for smaller ships and minor operations.

This was the more important as the struggle with England had entered on a new phase.* The capacity of the French for projects of an ambitious nature was exhausted by the Battle of Barfleur,

* *Vide supra*, p. 86.

and for the rest of the war the real waspish tactics which could not be carried to a successful term, at least succeeded to irritate and make without imposing an undue strain upon the enemy. The French issued letters of marque to privateersmen who made Dunkirk and St. Malo bases from which they sallied forth to destroy the commerce of the enemy. The most famous of the privateers were Jean Bart [b. 1650] and the inimitable Duguay Trouin [b. 1673]. Bart was a commander of exceptional ability and herculean strength, who had learnt the principles of seamanship in the school of De Ruyter. Trouin, who sacked an Irish village under the nose of a garrison before he was twenty, deserved to figure as a hero of romance. Both in their turn were captured by the English: both effected their escape. Bart used his strength and an iron file: Trouin found a Medea to release him. While Benbow fulfilled his duties in the dockyard these men were earning the hatred of the English and the gratitude of the *Roi Soleil*.

Though the London merchants had perhaps a different tale to tell, the Government were in reality eager enough to succour their mercantile marine, if only they could discover an efficacious remedy. Napoleon found the guerrilleros too much for him in the Peninsula, and the Admiralty of 1693 may be forgiven if they looked in vain for a trap to catch or a whip to flagellate the daring malefactors of the Channel. To satisfy public opinion it was at length resolved to punish the mother of privateers, the town of St. Malo herself, and for this purpose to utilize two recent inventions which had earned the approval of naval experts.

The French were late in putting forward a claim to the lordship of the sea, but they early displayed an inventiveness and faculty for construction which the English honoured with the sincerest form of flattery. About the time of the English Revolution one of Louis XIV's constructors produced the Galliot, or Bomb-Ketch, which was designed especially to accommodate that time-honoured engine of destruction, the mortar. The vertical fire of the mortar made it before all others the most effective weapon for siege work, and enabled the aggressor to search out places of apparent security behind the walls, instead of wasting his battery upon impenetrable bulwarks. The mortar had, how-

ever, a tremendous downward recoil, which had delayed its recognition as a serviceable instrument at sea. For the sake of stability, the Ketch was given unusual breadth of beam. She had but two masts only, a main and a mizen, and mounted on the crowded bows the deadly armament. Further aft, on the recoil, that part of the vessel which lay below the mortar was filled with a tangled mass of waste rope cut into lengths. The appalling nature of a Galliot may be estimated from the fact that the mortar or bomb was capable of hurling shells and carcasses, balls of stone, bags of grape, and other missiles with a possible weight of two hundred pounds, at a time when the most formidable shot from the mouth of a ship's gun weighed no more than forty-two. The terrors of a bombardment were of course by no means diminished when such horrible projectiles, ugly enough already, came hurtling downwards through the air like a shower of prodigious meteorites.

The Bomb-vessel, Galliot or Mortar-boat had come to stay, but there was adopted about the same time a more terrific, more appalling craft, christened with engaging simplicity the Machine, and by her familiars alluded to as the Infernal. She was a variant of the fire-ship, and an ancestress of the torpedo. She bore a close resemblance to that famous ship which the burghers of Antwerp had constructed to demolish the Duke of Parma's bridge in the investment of 1585. The principle was exactly similar, but the sixteenth-century design had undergone considerable modification at the hands of a Dutch engineer, and the Admiralty thought so highly of the new pattern that more than thirty vessels of the type were added to the Navy in a twelve-month. The possibilities of the Machine were those of a monstrous shell. The hideous barque, crammed with everything calculated to pierce and penetrate, to batter and destroy, could at desire be blown to fragments, and carry in every direction the death and destruction of a volcano.

Benbow appeared off St. Malo about the middle of November, 1693. In order to approach as near as possible he hoisted the Danish flag, and on the evening of his arrival, and on two successive evenings, he pumped bombs over the battlements from a fleet of ketches acting under his direction. Having thus, as it were, prepared the ground, on the fourth night he made ready to launch

against the defenceless citizens the first Infernal ever used by the English Navy. The vessel contained no less than a hundred barrels of powder, roofed in by a ceiling of planks. These rafters were perforated with holes for the admission of flames, and supported an inflammable thatch of laths and faggots, shavings, straw and tow, liberally anointed with pitch, resin and tar. On the top of all came the missiles—cannon-balls of iron and stone, grenades and bombs, shells and carcasses, and iron chains, in a mantle of tarpaulin.

What followed is told in diverting fashion by the historian Smollett. The Machine was to have been moored under the very walls, "but she struck upon a rock before she arrived at the place, and the engineer was obliged to set her on fire and retreat. She continued burning for some time, and at last blew up with such an explosion as shook the whole town like an earthquake, uprooted three hundred houses, and broke all the glass and earthenware for three leagues around. A capstan that weighed two hundred pounds was transported into the place, and falling upon a house, levelled it to the ground; the greatest part of the wall toward the sea tumbled down, and the inhabitants were overwhelmed with consternation."

It has been found in recent years that besieged and besiegers have formed rather different impressions of the same bombardment; that while the bombardiers have with some compunction wondered whether a single soul remained alive within the town, the objects of their pity have in their cellars discussed with languid interest how long the enemy were likely to rest content with a mere display of fireworks. This may, or may not have been the case at St. Malo. Certain it is that no Duguay Trouin was surrendered to his foes; no prominent burghers arrayed themselves in the hair-shirts of penitence, and put off in boats with halibuts round their necks. If under cover of the bombardment, if amid the consternation caused by the explosion of the Machine, an army of occupation had been landed, the ruthless work of desolation might have been completed. At least a more accurate estimate of damage done would have been formed. As it is the narrative halts to a lame conclusion.

A similar attempt was subsequently made under the superintendence of Benbow at Dunkirk; but as the Infernal proved

unable to fulfil a half of the expectations she had raised, the popularity which acclaimed her invention began rapidly to wane, and before the close of the war the dockyards had ceased altogether to construct the vessel.

When the Peace of Ryswick (1697) brought to a termination the war between William III and Louis XIV, the English monarch determined to send an expedition to the West Indies to hunt down pirates, and to vindicate the honour of Great Britain in those seas. A similar venture in the previous year had been attended by most untoward circumstances, and had served only to aggravate the disease which it had been designed to cure. William had engaged the services of a New York shipmaster, called William Kidd, who had won reputable distinction by wide experience in every sea. The Government had put a ship of thirty guns at his disposal; the King and Lord Chancellor made liberal contributions to the cost of her outfit; and Captain Kidd set sail blessed by all to whom the buccaneer was odious. But the goodwill and sympathy of honest men only served to darken a taint of villainy in the captain's heart. No sooner had he manned his ship and found a breeze than he tossed his obligations contemptuously overboard, and ran the "Jolly Roger" to the maintop.

It was not quite evident where this monster would be found, but the obvious man to deal with him was the pioneer whose unprecedented exploits in the Channel had riveted upon him the admiring gaze of all men. A duel between Benbow and Kidd would have been worthy of the pen of Homer, but the "Wizard of the Seas" had neglected western waters for newer hunting grounds, and Benbow's ardent search was fore-ordained to failure. Pirates, however, of meaner mould were as thick as rats in Hamelin, and provided ample scope for a man of metal.

Incidentally Benbow performed upon this cruise a service which ministered better to his own sense of patriotism than to his royal master's scheme of politics. His arrival in the West Indies had been anticipated by a party of Scotchmen, who had resolved to establish in the heart of Darien a vast commercial exchange. The Darien scheme threatened to undermine the South Sea Company, and throw the East India Company into the

shade. It promised to the seventeenth century all the benefits which the Panama Canal scheme failed to achieve in the nineteenth, but it failed to take into account the unhealthiness of the climate and the proprietary rights of the Spaniard. The fury aroused in the Escorial admitted of no bargaining, and an expedition was equipped at Carthagena to dispossess the intruders and push them into the sea. Benbow arriving off Carthagena discovered the destination of the little Armada, and deemed himself obliged to handle it rather roughly. He little dreamed that the miserable Scotchmen whom he thus befriended were to be thwarted and ruined less by the armies of Spain and the ravages of malaria than by the jealousy of the English, and the refusal of Jamaica to supply an ounce of bread.* On his return to England the King was pleased to overlook Benbow's political indiscretion. He avowed himself well satisfied with the results of the voyage, and in recognition of the Admiral's zeal granted him an honourable augmentation of his arms. His shield was already emblazoned with three bows bent. Henceforth they were quartered on a ground diapered with arrows.

SANTA MARTA

AUGUST 19-24, 1700.

Soon after the Admiral's return, Europe was thrown into a state of no ordinary excitement by the death [November 1, 1700] of that Spanish king whom Benbow had so delighted by his summary treatment of the infidel. The evident intention of Louis XIV to grasp on behalf of his grandson as large a portion of the Spanish inheritance as the indulgence of Europe would permit, demanded the immediate despatch of a second West Indian expedition to watch the interests of England, and to frustrate any premature attempt on Louis' part to occupy Carthagena, and other vital points of Spanish America. Benbow's experience singled him out for the task, but William considered that he had already borne his share of service on a station which for more reasons than one was reckoned highly undesirable. He therefore approached other captains, but strange to say they felt themselves unequal to so high an honour. They smoothed their ruffles, shook their por-

* The mutually antagonistic Parliaments of Westminster and Edinburgh were not united for nearly ten years after this visit of Benbow to the West.

tentious wigs, and begged leave to be excused. "If we cannot persuade our beaux, we must turn again to honest Benbow," said the King, and approaching the Admiral with some diffidence, he asked whether he also had objections to a station which had grown no healthier since the days of Drake. With characteristic stoutness Benbow replied that he knew no differences of climate; that, for his part, he thought no officer had a right to choose his station; and that himself should be at all times ready to go to any part of the world. His Majesty thought proper to send him.

Benbow arrived at Barbados before the end of 1701, and was therefore in good time to make all necessary arrangements before the official outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession. His opportune appearance forestalled the French, who, under the leadership of Du Casse, did not reach the Indies till the summer of 1702. Learning from a trustworthy source that the French commander contemplated an instant occupation of Carthagena, Benbow set out to seek his foe; and on 19th August to his great delight discovered the enemy off Santa Marta,* a port on the Spanish main a hundred miles north-east of Du Casse's destination. Benbow had good cause to congratulate himself. Operating in hostile waters where both France and Spain could draw upon wider resources than the country which he represented, and where the united forces of the two could make of his responsibilities a heavy burden, he yet found himself in momentary possession of a force distinctly superior to that of his antagonist. Du Casse, in the *Heureux*, had certainly ten ships at his disposal, but half of them were quite unfit to take their place in the line.

With regard to the English side, the pathetic tragedy that follows demands an intimate acquaintance with the principal actors. They are herewith introduced.

<i>Defiance</i>	Captain Kirkby
<i>Pandennis</i>	Captain Haddock
<i>Windsor</i>	Captain Constable
<i>Breda</i> † (Flagship)	Captain Fogg
<i>Greenwich</i>	Captain Wade
<i>Ruby</i>	Captain Walton
<i>Falmouth</i>	Captain Villiers

* See Map, p. 158.

† It was at *Breda* that Charles II received the joyful news that the English people were ready to restore him to the throne. There was a Royal Oak in favour about the name which made it appropriate.

When Benbow discovered that the enemy were delivered into his hand, he decided to engage immediately; but some of his ships were four miles astern, and this obliged him to lie to under easy sail until his brothers-in-arms came up. Two of the laggards, the *Defiance* and the *Windsor*, came along in so leisurely a fashion that he sent them an order to make all possible speed. Towards evening a line of battle was formed, with Captain Kirkby leading, but the *Defiance* and the *Windsor* so little liked the warmth of their entertainment, that after receiving a couple of broadsides they turned their noses into the wind and so departed. Benbow, as may well be imagined, suffered extreme annoyance, and to prevent a repetition of the mischance, resolved to put his own flagship at the head of the line when morning light* enabled him to resume the offensive. To ensure the success of his plan he clung to the enemy all through the hours of darkness, and all through the second day he continued the pursuit. So far, however, from shaming the delinquents, his change of position served only to make matters worse, and the whole force, with a single exception, fell astern. The exception was the *Ruby*, who proved herself precious indeed, and backed up the Admiral in a manner Benbow had a right to expect, though the behaviour of the others made it remarkable.

The criminality of the five recalcitrant captains evinced itself unmistakably on the third day, when Du Casse, finding he had outpaced some part of the pursuit turned about, and hurled his force viciously upon the *Breda* and her plucky little comrade. The *Breda* felt herself a match for any two of her foes, and might be trusted to return any argument with interest; but the *Ruby*, less masculine than her sister, was sadly outmatched. Benbow, forgetting his isolation in the joy of battle, was hotly engaged throughout the day, but seeing the injury done to his companion he first protecting arms around her, lowered his boats, and towed her out of action. The *Defiance* and the *Windsor* were now near enough to discern how the fight was going; but instead of bringing help to a friend in distress, they stood by in the sullen silence

* The duel with Du Casse, though it began on the 19th August, did not culminate in an agony till the 24th inst., the sixth day of the fight.

of stupidity. The other ships fired in a desultory way more as a pretence to cover their own pusillanimity than with any intention of influencing the result.

On the fourth day the wind shifted, and brought relief to Du Casse, who had been harried incessantly. On board the English flagship it was computed that the dilatory *Greenwich*, sleepy sluggard, had fallen at the least nine miles astern, while the remainder, with masterly inactivity and a fussy semblance of zeal, were attempting little and achieving less. Benbow may have felt less inclined to reproach his subordinates on this particular day because the lightness of the wind made their task a difficult one; but he again did his best to show them the way, and beat up into range, cheered on by the *Ruby*, who was once more ready for the fray, though hardly equal to the exertions which the weather demanded. On the fifth day the wind restored the advantage to Benbow. Though his ship was beginning to suffer from the prolonged strain to which she had been exposed, he worked like a Titan, and won encouragement from the capture of a tender that followed Du Casse. This trifling gain was, however, counterbalanced by a serious loss. Further misadventures made it impossible for the *Ruby* to hold her own any longer, and at the Admiral's order she retired unwillingly to Jamaica. Even now it was not too late for a victory. Benbow had fought five enemies for five days, and had still in reserve five ships that had suffered no wounds at all.

It is hardly credible that Englishmen should have been found willing to act spectators to the scene. The cowardice of cravens might well have been dispelled by the magnificent leadership of such a chief. The peril of fellow-countrymen should have aroused a militant consciousness, and a desire to retaliate in the sorriest soul alive. The ignominious shame of his behaviour acted at length on Captain Vincent, and the penitent *Falmouth* moved forward ~~at last to~~ take the *Ruby's* place.

On the last day Benbow excelled himself. His running fight had not been without effect. The *Heureux* was sorely hurt, and Benbow was determined to take her, or to die. Time and again he gave the order to board. He received a grievous wound in the arm. What cared he? Again! Steady! Once more!

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

he was wounded—a ghastly wound in the face; but the enemy had lost her mainyard and her fore topsail, and her mizen had gone by the board. If only those rascally captains would support him! The flag for battle still summoned them to their duty. Would they not come even now? Now, when the enemy's flagship was all but won? Ere they could come, he received another wound. A hideous chain-shot shattered his leg; and more dead than alive he suffered himself to be borne below. The moment the terrible wound had been dressed, indomitable still, he had himself carried up on deck, and there propped up in a cot he conquered the racking pain, and continued to direct the battle with a sublime invincible courage that has won him immortality. One of his lieutenants hurried up to him, and expressed his deep sorrow at the accident to the Admiral's limb. "I am sorry too," replied Benbow; "but I would rather have lost them both than seen this dishonour brought upon the British nation . . . but if they try to board, and another shot should bear me off, behave like brave men, and fight it out."

The four degenerates were now in a position to redeem their fame, but one and all, *Defiance*, *Windsor*, *Greenwich* and *Pendennis*, poured but a broadside into the disabled ship, and fled before the wind. In striking contrast to such abject shamelessness the French vessels, nobly seconding one another, managed at last to work their way between the hapless *mal-Heureux* and her dogged antagonist. This admirable manœuvre enabled them not only to carry their own ship into safety, but also for a time at least to put the unwearied *Breda* out of action by a telling combination of their broadsides. Benbow gave instant orders to refit, and nailed his flag for battle to the mast. This done, he sent to remind his faithless underlings that they were by birthright English, and by assumption—men. On receiving the message Captain Kikby had himself conveyed to the flagship, and approaching a commander, in whose presence he was unfit to maintain any attitude but that of prostration, shook at him the finger of admonition, and gravely took him to task. He told his superior plainly that "he had better desist; that the French were very strong, and that from what was past he might guess that he could make nothing of it." Benbow was indisposed to argue the

case with such a creature. He sought relief in a council of war, and summoned all captains to his side. When they arrived he set his views before them, it may well be with some force; but threats and remonstrances were levelled in vain, reproaches were stingless and arguments empty. There was complete unanimity among the councillors, and even Captain Fogg, his own friend, followed the lead of Kirkby the poltroon. Realizing the serious nature of the conspiracy, Benbow was reluctantly compelled to abandon the enterprise. Sorrowfully he turned away from the scene of the encounter, terribly hurt in arm and face and leg; but in spirit more grievously affected, and in soul cast down. Poor honest Benbow! Even at this distance all true Britons can feel something of the sympathy that welled up so generously in the heart of a homeland that knew him.

The terrible wound in his leg necessitated amputation, but Benbow in all his pain was not unconscious of his duty. He resolved to bring to justice the men who had betrayed their country at her need. Captain Hudson died very shortly after his arrival at Jamaica, and so avoided a more ignominious fate. Captain Kirkby, together with Captains Wade and Constable, were charged before court-martial with cowardice, disobedience and neglect of duty. Captain Constable was acquitted on the score of cowardice, but was dismissed the service, and ordered to be imprisoned during Her Majesty's pleasure. It seems probable that he died in prison. Captains Kirkby and Wade were convicted on all counts, and straightway condemned to death. They were sent home on board the *Bristol*, and were shot at Spithead by a squad of Marines without being allowed to set their contaminated feet on English soil. The captains of the *Breda* and the *Falmouth* were also charged with conspiracy to frustrate the ends of victory, but they argued with some show of reason that their votes in favour of discontinuing the action were occasioned by a conviction that nothing but disaster could possibly ensue if the fight was to be maintained under circumstances similar to those that had up to that moment prevailed. They were suspended for a time, but were treated leniently, and afterwards reinstated. The only man who came out of the affair with credit to himself was Captain Walton of the *Ruby*, whose loyal assistance had formed the basis

bright spot amid the sordid details of a great catastrophe. He must indeed have felt repaid for his devotion when he heard the sentence passed on his unhappy friends. He lived to render valuable service to his country, and died full of honours at a ripe

old age. This is a story that when Du Casse arrived in safety at Cartagena, the first thing he did was to sit down, and write the following letter to his adversary:—

SIR,

I had little hopes on Monday last but to have supped in your cabin; but it pleased God to order it otherwise. I am thankful for it. As for those cowardly captains who deserted you, hang them up; for, by God, they deserve it!

DU CASSE.

Benbow never saw home again. The amputation of his limb induced a high fever, and the fever was aggravated by a keen sense of sorrow at the disgrace that had tarnished his shield, of disappointment that victory had hovered round his helm only to fly away. Early in November he breathed his last, and his poor body, hacked in the service of his country, found in Jamaica a resting-place unmarked, save by a dull plain slab of grey severity.

The story of the fight off Santa Marta will sometimes hint at a motive for the conduct of the captains other than that of sheer vulgar want of fortitude. It may be, as already suggested, that Benbow was a man of trying temperament who in his dealings with his staff discarded the gentler diplomacy of courteous tact for the rigours of coercion and brutality. Even supposing that this were so, it is difficult to believe that many Englishmen would willingly endorse a method of protest, so certain to recoil upon the protestants, so likely to bespatter with infamy the flag under which they served. Even if Benbow were the bully that some are willing to believe him, it is hard to resist the eloquent pleading of that closing scene, which has blotted out the blemishes that may have stained his character, and inscribed his name, a deathless memory, upon the battle-scroll of fame.

BENBOW

Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired:
Mute with folded arms they waited—
Not a gun was fired.

Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.

LORD TENNYSON.

VERNON

BORN 1684—DIED 1757

When Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sang this strain:
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves:
Britons never will be slaves.

JAMES THOMSON (1700-48)

Written in the heat of national anger at the outrages inflicted on British seamen by the *Guarda Costas* of Spain.

THE death of Queen Anne in 1714, followed a year later by that of the Grand Monarque, brought to a close a well-defined period of history. In England the thoughts of all were for the moment centred in the "Succession." The prospect of a German dynasty was far from popular, but a foreign king was more acceptable to the majority than a descendant of that sailor prince who had revived the spectre of Catholic persecution. The "Fifteen" fiasco offered poor prospect of an eventual restoration of the Stuarts, but there were many Jacobites left. If then the Hanoverians were to be firmly established on the throne, it was essential that the country should enjoy an interval of undisturbed repose. Years of unruffled calm and piping peace would endear the new dynasty to Englishmen, and remove all motives for interference on the part of continental statesmen, who might feel inclined to welcome a Pretender as a pawn on the chess-board of diplomacy.

No one realized this better than the famous minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who, in the dislike of the first two Georges for all things English, found excellent occasion to take upon his own

capable shoulders the whole burden of government, and into his own greedy hands the sole exercise of power. The long period of peace between the Jacobite Rising in 1715 and the more formidable Rebellion in 1745, constitutes the principal claim of Sir Robert to the gratitude of his country. Difficulties involving other nations arose to worry him from time to time; but whenever they admitted a peaceful solution, Walpole shrank from any demonstration of the might of England's arm.

One question, however, carried the ineradicable seeds of war, and threatened to overthrow a minister unversed in any but the arts of peace.

THE WAR OF JENKINS' EAR. 1739—?*

The Peace of Utrecht allowed the English to send a single ship once a year to a port in Spanish America. The English kept strictly within the limits of this ungenerous grant, but were quick to discover between the lines possibilities of which the Spaniards had not dreamed. The ship in question sailed with a bevy of consorts; and, arriving within hail of port, left her consorts safely out of sight, and pursued her way alone. When daylight faded, and the process of unlading was complete, the skipper declared his task unfinished, and proposed the resumption of work on the following day. During the hours of darkness his cargo was replenished from one of the attendant ships, and the Spaniards found to their amazement that the magic argosy was, like the widow's cruse, never empty. In this way the English secured an obvious advantage, and the single ship assumed the properties of an entire merchant fleet. There is no reason at all to suppose that this device exhausted the genius of the English for the discovery of means to dispose of their goods in markets where the door was shut and ordinary methods unavailable.

To cope with British smugglers the Spaniards had a police force ready to their hand.

Robbery on the high seas is as ancient as brigandage on land, and must always abound on ungarded waterways. But the

* The war never reached an independent conclusion, but was merged in the wider issues of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748.

period between the capture of Jamaica and the Peace of Utrecht was the golden age of the Pirate King.*

Even after the work of Drake and Blake the Spaniards still claimed to hold the New World "beyond the line," and still regarded all visits as unwarrantable intrusions.† Many reckless men, who found the ordinary vocations of mankind unworthy of their regard, set out from England and France to explode this fallacy. Because they preyed not on the World but on Spain alone, they repudiated the name of Pirates and called themselves Buccaneers, from *boucan*, a method of curing meat which they learned from the Caribs, and found exceedingly useful. It was chiefly owing to the exertions of these gentry that the English retained Jamaica and the French acquired Hayti. The noise of their fame filled the world. While Robinson Crusoe underwent his dreary exile in Juan Fernandez, Sir Henry Morgan was engaged in exploits, which for brazen audacity claim comparison with the wonder-deeds of Drake; and men of meaner stature made their names the terror of Spain from Dominica to the Bay of Campeachy.

So long as the Spaniards were unwilling to admit even Jamaica lawfully acquired, the English were not likely to listen to their grievances. The West Indies had to look after themselves, and for the work of extermination they constructed special ships, called Guarda Costas, or Coast Guard vessels. By the Peace of Utrecht the English acquired a right of way into the forbidden land. To show their gratitude they joined in the suppression of the buccancer; but the Guarda Costas had justified their existence, and found new scope for their activity among the smugglers.

As guardians of the Peace of Utrecht, and overseers of its smallest letter, they were confronted with work requiring some delicacy, and if a certain amount of clumsy cruelty besmirches their name, it must be remembered that they were trained in a rough school, and found themselves matched against an evasive lawbreaker, whose slippery devices were highly provocative.

Few chapters in the history of the British Navy are capable of interpretations so different as that which follows, for few are so

* No self-respecting Pirate in novel or play is complete without a Louis Quatorze wig of the blackest hue.

† Cp. *Hawkins to Blake*, pp. 3, 191.

intimately bound up with the disputations of home politicians. By the selfishness of his administration Walpole had raised against himself hosts of enemies in Parliament, and outside. His opponents charged him with all the abominations of corruption and intrigue, but above all with the degrading spirit of the coward who prefers to swallow any insult rather than stand up in arms and be bold. All those who honestly thought that England's fair name was being dragged in the dust of dishonour, were necessarily opposed to his compromises and conventions; but by the violence of their invective they laid themselves open to the reproach that their hostility was directed not so much at the foreign aggressor as at the premier who had so long deprived them of the fruits of office.

Thus it came about that the adherents of Walpole were tempted to minimize the extent of Spanish insults and British wrongs, while the opponents of Walpole were tempted to exaggerate them. Thus the celebrated Captain Jenkins figures alternately as a suffering martyr and a melodramatic charlatan; as a God-fearing gallant seaman and a wretched puppet, wire-pulled by self-styled patriots who had rescued him from the pillory. Admiral Vernon stands on a higher plane than Captain Jenkins, but he too has been subjected to treatment of a not dissimilar kind. He has been lauded and decried, abused and glorified; treated in fact as a tool in the hands of partisans rather than as the brave admiral and capable commander that he proved himself. Since his death adverse criticism has prevailed, and the majority of chroniclers, accepting the repulse at Carthage as a certain indication of his incompetence, have done their best to explain away his undeniable success at Porto Bello. Further reasons for this will declare themselves in the ensuing narrative. For the moment it will suffice to say that succeeding ages have acclaimed the political judgment of Walpole, and Admiral Vernon actively opposed him. In view of Sir Robert's taste for bribery this might in itself be put forward as a claim to honourable distinction. To whatever extent politics may obscure the issue, it should be remembered that Vernon is a name which the Navy still delights to honour.*

While discussion was proceeding in Parliament on the subject of commercial relations with Spain and the officiousness of in-

* H.M.S. *Vernon* is the torpedo school in Portsmouth harbour.

discreet Guarda Costas, leave was obtained for the introduction of one whose experience of Spanish affairs had been promised to throw a new and lurid light on the subject under debate. Richard Jenkins was the captain of the barque *Rebecca* hailing from Glasgow. On a return voyage to England he was sailing from Jamaica, which, it will be remembered, had been an English possession since the days of Cromwell, when his ship was boarded by Spanish officers, who proceeded to exercise their pretended right of search for contraband goods destined for ports of Spain. Nothing illicit was found, but the Spaniards were, if anything, rendered the more furious. They strung poor Jenkins up to the yard-arm, and cut him down again before the breath of life departed. As he recovered consciousness one of them slashed at his face with a cutlass, and all but severed one of his ears from his head. Another, more brutal still, tore off the mutilated member, and presenting it with mock solemnity to the agonized victim, begged him to take it home and assure King George that he too would be treated in similar fashion if ever he fell into the hands of Spain. Eagerly questioned as to his feelings at such a moment, Jenkins immortalized the occasion by replying: "I commended my soul to God, and my cause to my country." The poor captain was not examined on oath, but there was no doubt that he had lost an ear, and the missing member he produced as evidence. It may be added that he subsequently took part in an engagement at sea, and acquitted himself like a man.

Whatever may be the truth of the "pitiful tragedie," it served to focus attention on the West Indian question. The story, or fable, was passed from mouth to mouth through the length and breadth of the land, and roused to fever-pitch the righteous anger of true-born Britons. Was it for this that England had warred with Spain, and driven her fleets from the sea! Had Drake and Howard, Grenville and Blake so little accomplished that England's premier must allow the enormities of Spain to pass unpunished! Even if smuggling was indulged in by the English, on the Spaniards lay the burden of proof, on the Spaniards devolved the duty of preventing it, or of agreeing to arrangements that would render it unnecessary. If in the exercise of invigilation they caught an offender red-handed, they might confiscate his cargo, or detain his ship; but to overhaul innocent vessels, wherever found, was

offensive: to exercise the right of search on the high seas, was lawless; and to invade an innocent ship miles from port, and in the childish wrath of disappointment to reduce the deck to a shambles, was repugnant to civilization, and not for a moment to be tolerated by any nation that valued its self-respect.

Amid the fervid eloquence [Walpole and his sympathizers would of course call it "frothy vapouring"] with which the "patriots" assailed in Parliament the policy of peace, the popular sentiments found no more enthusiastic exponent than Edward Vernon. Born towards the close of Charles II's reign, he came of a good old family, which numbered among its more celebrated members the far-famed Dorothy of Haddon Hall. His father was a well-known member of Parliament whose abilities won for him the dignity of what to-day is called cabinet rank. Edward was educated at Westminster under the famous Dr. Busby, who kept his hat on his head in the presence of his monarch lest his pupils should vainly imagine that there lived a man greater than himself. Entering the navy at the moment when Anne ascended the throne Vernon took a part in all the great sea battles of the Spanish Succession war. He was present at Vigo Bay, at the capture of Gibraltar and at the action off Malaga, gaining for himself a reputation not only for skill and gallantry, but for devotion to his work and consideration for those who served in his command. He won employment also in the West Indies where he doubtless acquainted himself with the vulnerable points in the Spanish position. He was serving under Sir Cloudesley Shovel when that gallant officer was lost off the Scilly Isles. Vernon was in the *Phoenix*. The *Phoenix* ran aground, but by a miracle was carried off again. Under George I the gallant Captain entered Parliament as member for Penryn, a Cornish borough. His past experiences enabled him to speak with authority on West Indian subjects, and his eager patriotism, ["noisy partisanship" say his detractors] lent fire to his words. He declared that the national honour demanded a display of force; he informed the House that the capture of Porto Bello would "distress the enemy in their very vitals;" and he offered with half a dozen ships to take the place himself.

To Walpole it was becoming more and more evident that for once the powers of persuasion were inadequate to obtain for his

country the satisfaction to which she was entitled. Loath as he was to draw the sword he was forced to do so less by the clamour of his countrymen than by the obstinacy of Spain. The acceptance of Captain Vernon's offer would muffle the national outcry, and very possibly prove a menace sufficient to awake in the Spaniards a more generous disposition. Even if the expedition failed, the discredit would rest on his opponents who were Vernon's supporters, and the departure of the honourable and gallant member from the House would rid him of a merciless tormentor. Inducements such as these were potent, but they failed to bring him perfect contentment. In the days of Sheriffmuir, France and Spain had been estranged by family rivalry, but on the outbreak of the Polish Succession war (1733-1735) they had made up their differences, buried the hatchet, and concluded a treaty of alliance. They had many a grudge against England, and the Stuarts only awaited a favourable moment for the renewal of their schemes. Supposing that France and Spain united to assist the Pretender. . . . His cogitations were interrupted by the merry sound of bells. The country was wildly delighted at his tardy declaration of war. Every church rang out a joyful peal. "They may ring their bells now," he muttered gloomily; "before long they'll be wringing their hands."*

THE TAKING OF PORTO BELLO

NOVEMBER 21, 1739

To our good King, now loudly sing, may Providence attend him!
To Admiral Vernon, toss a glass, may Heaven aye defend him!
To Commodore Brown toss another down, and to each gallant fellow
Who did so bravely play his part at the taking of Porto Bello.

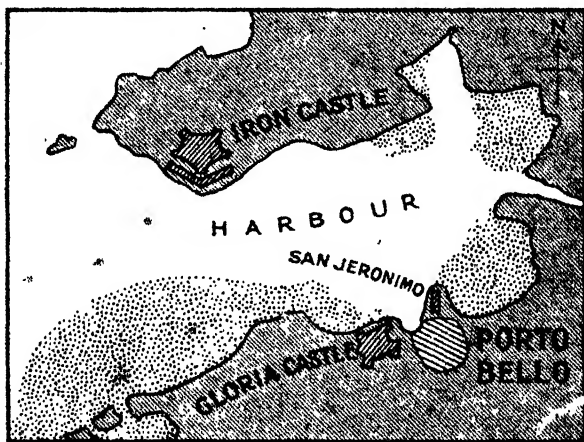
OLD SONG

It will be remembered that when Drake set forth in 1572 to execute vengeance upon the Spaniards for the wrongs he had suffered in Mexico, he planned an attack upon Nombre de Dios, the point at which the wealth of Peru was garnered to await transshipment for Spain. Since then the Spaniards had abandoned the

* Walpole's melancholy forecast met fulfilment in that "Black Friday" in 1745, when Bonnie Prince Charlie reached the Highlands, and George the King ordered his yacht to await him at the Tower stairs.

site in favour of Porto Bello, a harbour in the same neighbourhood, equally unhealthy, but with superior qualities as an anchorage.

The town itself lay at the south-east corner of the harbour. It was approached from the west through a narrow channel rather more than half a mile broad, guarded by the Iron Castle, a fortification mounting 100 guns. The citizens derived additional protection from the Gloria Castle which mounted 120 guns, and from the San Jeronimo bastion which enabled them to enfilade a force that ventured to move inshore. As a depot for the produce of



PORTO BELLO

November 21, 1739

Peruvian mines Porto Bello held out the prospect of limitless plunder, but the chance depended on the moment of attack; and as the town was but a resting-place for treasure, the moment of attack might very well find it empty. The capture of a great trade route terminus would of course interrupt for a time the whole industry of the isthmus. If the place were occupied and a garrison established, permanent dislocation of the traffic might ensue. But as each of the fortresses demanded 300 defenders, no settlement was possible without the services of an army. In accepting

his opponent's knightly challenge Walpole had taken him strictly at his word; and when Vernon, now Vice-Admiral of the Blue, arrived off Porto Bello, 20th November, 1739, he had with him no more than the six ships which he had demanded in the heat of debate. His urgent request for Marines had gone unheeded, and on arrival at Jamaica he was compelled to beg the services of any force the Governor could spare. This Governor, enthusiastic in the cause, placed at his disposal half the garrison of the dependency. This amounted, however, to no more than 200 men.

On the way out Vernon had drilled his crews in gunnery with steady persistence. He was rewarded by a degree of excellence that promised the happiest results. In his last orders he issued stringent injunctions to his officers to discountenance random shooting, and to satisfy themselves that the aim was good before giving the word to fire. He also enjoined silence on all engaged. His force if small was business-like and efficient.

On the morning of 21st November the wind was blowing from the east in the teeth of the invaders. They had therefore to beat up into the harbour, and found some difficulty in taking the positions assigned to them. The first two ships had already engaged the Iron Castle and shown the quality of their marksmanship, when Vernon himself in the *Burford* came into the zone of fire. He instantly ordered the boats to be lowered, and appointed storming parties to effect a landing. The fortress was perched high up, and he judged that his men would diminish their danger the nearer they approached to the shore. His surmise proved correct. Two men alone were wounded in the boats. Next he took his own ship into the position best calculated to assist him in working his will on the castle, a position which of course presented the acme of hazard to himself. The *Burford* sustained some injury, and his own life was momentarily imperilled, but he gained his way. The musketeers in his tops directed their fire exclusively on the lower battery, and made such good practice that its guns were all out of action by the time that the landing party was ready for the assault. Clambering on one another's shoulders they scrambled through the embrasures, overcame resistance, and carried the fort.

Of the defenders, some retreated to the upper works, but many fled for their lives and stopped not till they reached the town.

itself, while the Spaniards, by their obstinate and mutinous behaviour, were far from being able to give the populace. The more valiant of the garrison proved unequal to a prolonged resistance. Fresh ships were moving to the attack. They had suffered many casualties; their walls appeared to offer no obstacle to their limpet-like assailants; their hearts failed them and they surrendered. Vernon had now good hopes of a successful issue. The wind continued to blow from the east, and made further ingress quite impossible; but the Spaniards had already learned the nature of their antagonists and were ready to treat. They offered to abandon San Jeronimo and Gloria if their ships were spared. Vernon rejected their overtures. The crews might leave the ships, the populace retire, the garrison march out with the honours of war; but ships, and town, and forts must be surrendered, and unless an immediate decision were arrived at, hostilities would be instantly resumed. The Governor acquiesced. Porto Bello was won.

Having no force with which to occupy the town Vernon ordered the work of demolition to begin at once. Unluckily the moment proved a close time for treasure. The spoils of Peru had already departed for Spain. Ten thousand dollars were taken, and Vernon arranged for their distribution among his company. Of the hostile armament he selected some fifty guns as worthy of removal and destroyed 200. One hundred and twenty barrels of captured powder he utilized in destroying the fortifications. The Iron Castle, Jeronimo and Gloria were razed to the ground, but their sturdy masonry withstood the battering of three laborious weeks.*

The news was received with rapture in England. The name of Vernon was in everybody's mouth. He was a gallant scion of the good old days: a seaman worthy to rank beside Drake himself: a man in a thousand who taught the legislature to listen to his counsel, and then translated it into action. The City of London granted him their freedom in a gold box. * The innkeepers took down their signs, painted out St. George or the Anchor, and substituted the Admiral's head with his piercing eyes and trim little wig. The opposition, in seconding an address of congratula-

* Porto Bello is to-day an obscure little village, inhabited by a handful of niggers. It is unvisited by passing vessels, and the undergrowth springs thickly where once the bastion rose.

tion to the King, insisted on being "immediately." "To this day there survives" a "wonder. Some of Vernon" down near Edinburgh town, "after the famous victory. Porto Bello" suburbs of the Northern capital.*

CARTHAGENA

MARCH TO APRIL, 1741

Walpole's earliest venture in the lists had not been unsuccessful for a minister of peace, though his continuance in office as the executor of a policy which he had always denounced, has been condemned by his most eulogistic biographers. It served to infuriate his opponents who had won a title to the helm of state by their advocacy of a policy which had proved inevitable. Walpole had taunted them with the shallowness of their sentiments, with the affectation of their patriotism; but in the game of jeers he had played into their hands. They found his devotion to the cause of peace an empty subterfuge. They declared his acts admitted of but one interpretation—love of place, love of power, love of pocket. Small blame to them if they persecuted him remorselessly. His position henceforth depended on his ability to prove himself as capable in the management of warfare as in the control of parties or the conduct of finance.†

There was plenty to be done in the Indies; but before any great project could be compassed reinforcements were necessary. A flotilla equal to the occasion could not of course be equipped at a moment's notice, and valuable time was lost before Sir Chaloner Ogle‡ was ready to start. When he did set out he con-

* Though its origin is still involved in some controversy, there is good reason to believe that the National Anthem in its present form was first heard at a concert held to celebrate the "happy and glorious" capture of Porto Bello.

† Walpole's warlike schemes met with disaster in 1741, and the great minister fell at the beginning of 1742.

‡ In 1722 Bartholomew Roberts, the original of Scott's Cleveland in *The Pirate*, was the terror of the seas. Captain Ogle in the *Swallow* came up with him on the west coast of Africa. Roberts had three ships. Ogle-lured one away, and returned with the Jolly Roger above the Union Jack. The

...sailed for the West Indies, carrying an army of ... powerful fleet of twenty-seven ... under the command of Lord ... moved worth, who had gained a ... of Queen Anne's reign.

...son, however, in the entire fleet filled the ... post of Surgeon's Mate in one of the warships. This was none other than Toby Smollett, at that time a penniless nobody with an unprofitable knowledge of medicine, but destined to become one of the leading lights in the literary history of his country. In his entertaining story of *Roderick Random*, which is largely autobiographical, and contains a vivid picture of life aboard a man-o'-war in the early days of the eighteenth century, Smollett gives a detailed account of the affair at Carthagena, and the substance of this he afterward incorporated in his *History of England*. As his evidence is first-hand evidence, it is of course very valuable, but should not be accepted as unprejudiced without careful enquiry into the character and antecedents of the witness.

In his *History* Smollett writes: "Had this armament been ready to act in the proper season of the year, under the conduct of wise experienced officers, united in councils, and steadily attached to the interest and honour of their country, the Havannah and the whole island of Cuba might have been easily reduced; the whole treasure of the Spanish West Indies would have been intercepted; and Spain must have been humbled into the most abject submission."

This sounds a most terrible indictment of poor Vernon, who is by allusion an incompetent Jacobite; but it is only fair to remember that friend Toby had, in addition to a remarkable faculty for making the very most of a story, a tendency to exaggeration, which must declare itself to all his readers, and a reputation for malignancy which made him very odious to some of his contemporaries who charge him further with a consuming thirst for scandal of the lowest order.

two felons, unsuspecting, sailed out to meet him, and in the fight that followed Roberts was killed, Ogle, returning to England with three prizes, received a knighthood.

His taste for sarcasm found its outlet in the telling of what *he* considered to be the truth. "But this step our heroes did not take, in the enemy's distress, and gave them no aid, in desire, in order to recollect themselves," he reproves those who would like to have the authorities influenced by the comfortable knowledge that "those who died went to a better place, and those who survived were more easily maintained." His airy generalizations on points of strategy, and his imputation of improbable motives foster the inference that his knowledge was derived from idle tittle-tattle, and that his *utopian* was that of a man who loathed the task on which he was employed. Of Porto Bello Smollett says: "It was an exploit which was magnified much above merit." When he adds that Vernon afterwards "performed nothing worthy of the reputation he then acquired, and the people began to perceive that they had mistaken his character," it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the malice of Toby has resulted in the permanent defamation of the subject of his gibes.

It was not until the beginning of 1741 that Sir Chaloner Ogle joined forces with Vernon at Jamaica. He brought the Admiral sad news. The gallant Cathcart had fallen sick at Dominica, and died of dysentery. The loss was irreparable. Not only did the expedition lose the invaluable services of a trusty soldier, but the command of the army fell to General Wentworth whose dilatoriness and indecision roused in the Admiral's breast a wrathful impatience that was justifiable, but hardly calculated to improve matters. "The Admiral and General," writes Smollett, "contracted a hearty contempt for each other, and took all opportunities of expressing their mutual dislike; and each proved more eager for the disgrace of his rival than jealous for the honour of the nation." [7]

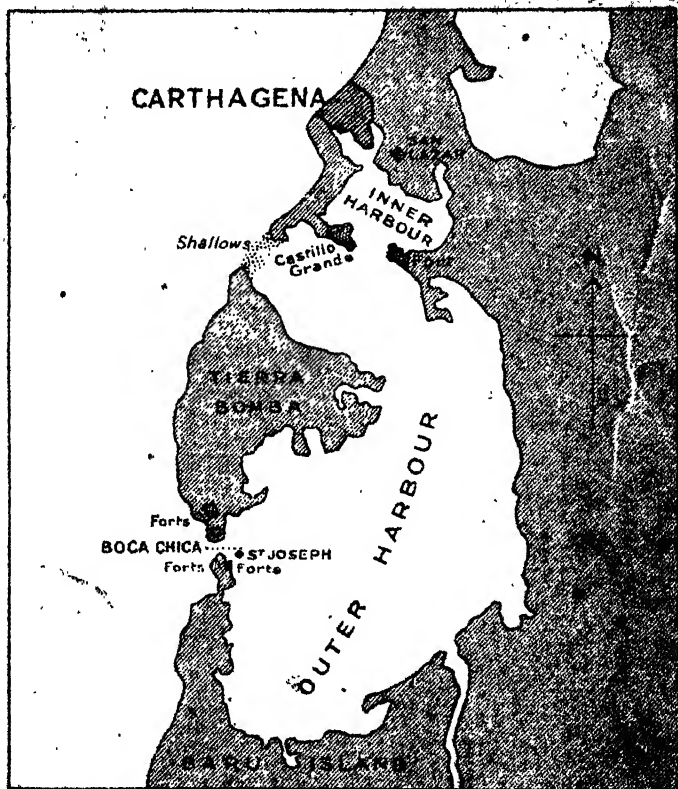
After due consultation it was resolved to attack Carthagena, the principal city of the Spanish Main, the scene of Drake's exploit in 1585, and the finest and largest city in America. It

* Carthagena, as a port, was the complement of the Bahian terminus. It provided ample accommodation for the ships while they awaited the arrival of the gold from Panama.

the Gulf of Darien. Its west-
ward entrance is by reason of a glacier
very shallow. To the south of the city
the sea a splendid harbour more than
a league long. The entrance is at the south-west corner,
and its straitsness, which allows but a single ship to enter at a
time, has earned for it the name of the Boca Chica, or Little
Mouth. When Vernon arrived in the early days of March,
1741, the Boca Chica was splendidly guarded. On the northern
side was a splendid fort of eighty guns "which might have been
maintained by resolute men till the day of judgment." This
tower of strength had ministering redoubts, christened after Saint
Philip and Saint James, with twenty-six guns more. On the
opposite side of the channel a fortress of twenty guns and another
very important were flanked by the batteries of Fort Saint Joseph,
a rich lay on an islet commanding the "mouth." From the islet
a boom had been constructed to connect it with the northern
fortress, and behind the boom four warships mounted guard.
These formidable bulwarks barred the approach to an outer
harbour whose magnificent proportions found contrast with an
inner haven inaccessible to larger ships on account of its shoals.
The passage-way to the inner harbour was protected on the sea
side by the Castillo Grande mounting sixty guns, by a companion
battery on the opposite shore, and by two warships. The town
itself was heavily fortified, and at a little distance to the south-
east the fort of San Lazar enabled the Spaniards to enfilade a
force attacking the town from the sea.

As the affair at Cartagena was "unworthy of Vernon's reputa-
tion," and led people "to perceive that they had mistaken his
character," it will not be necessary to describe in detail what he
did. Suffice it to say that he pounded to pieces the redoubts of
Saint Philip and Saint James; in conjunction with the army as-
saulted the great Boca Chica Castle, only to find himself exposed
to a fire from the opposite shore; turned his attention to the
opposite shore, and demolished its batteries; captured the islet
fort of Saint Joseph; received the surrender of the Boca Chica;
broke the boom; captured or sank the warships; pursued his way;
captured the Castillo Grande; crushed the opposition of its
attendant obstacles; destroyed seven galleons; annihilated fifty

smaller vessels; and covered the entrance by a boom which enabled it to open or close at will. The boats of San Lazar. These unconsidered trifles were not mentioned in the truthful words which grace his monument in Westminster Abbey.



CARTHAGENA

1741

"At Cartagena he conquered as far as naval force could carry victory."

It is not necessary to heap disparagement on General Wentworth for the inglorious attack on San Lazar. He was not the

SEA-KINGS OF BRITAIN

man for an emergency. The rankerous Toby who levels his indiscriminate shafts alike at the good and unjust, remarks: "Whether our renowned General *Wentworth* in his army who knew how to approach it in form, or *Wentworth* assisted entirely to the fame of his arms, I shall not determine, but, certain it is, a resolution was taken in a council of war to attack the place with musketry only. This was put in execution and succeeded accordingly; the enemy giving them such a hearty reception that the greatest part of the detachment took up their everlasting residence on the spot." If there was one point on which General *Wentworth* was vainly obstinate, it was the employment of artillery against *San Lázar*. Perhaps it would have been wiser if *Vernon* had humoured him; but in truth the stars in their courses fought against *Wentworth*. Before the capture of *Castillo Grande* the climate and bad provisions had caused a "bilious fever which raged with such violence that three-fourths of those it invaded died in a deplorable manner." Operations on land added terrifying numbers to the sick list, and the appalling mortality depressed the spirits of all.

At the request of the General the investment of *San Lázar* was abandoned, and the troops returned to the ships. Doctor *Toby* was "much less surprised that people should die on board, than that any should recover" . . . "especially as our provision consisted of putrid salt beef, to which the sailors gave the name of *Irish horse*; salt pork of *New England*, which, though neither fish nor flesh, savoured of both; bread from the same country, every biscuit whereof, like a piece of clockwork, moved by its own internal impulse occasioned by the myriads of insects that dwelt within it; and butter served out by the gill, that tasted like train-oil thickened with salt." The approach of the rainy season filled the cup of misery to overflowing: the men died like flies, and "such was the economy in some ships, that, rather than be at the trouble of interring the dead, the commanders ordered their men to throw their bodies overboard, many without either ballast or winding-sheet; so that numbers of human carcasses floated in the harbour until they were devoured by sharks and carrion crows."

Vernon was not the man to abandon an enterprise even under such distressing conditions. He thought it might still be possible to take the city with the ships alone. As an experiment he determined to send one of the vessels taken from the enemy into

VERNON

the inner harbour. He called for volunteers. The *Galicia* was manned, and warped through the shallows. All, however, to no purpose. The ship was soon aground and her crew applied the match, and retired in the boats. Admiral Toby laughed immoderately over this "absurd exploit" and seeking an explanation suggested as a possible cause "that which induced Don Quixote to attack the windmill." It is not perhaps surprising to find him possessed of the very information which the Admiral required, "for a little further to the left he might have stationed four or five of the largest ships abreast within pistol-shot of the walls."

Nothing further was attempted, and when the captured works had been destroyed, the fleet with drooping hearts turned north again to seek the wholesome comforts of Jamaica.

One further episode during Vernon's West Indian command deserves notice, because it provides an interesting commentary on the operations at Carthagea. Soon after the abandonment of the great attempt a descent was made on Santiago in the south east of Cuba. The army still under the command of Wentworth was once more safely landed; and the fleet still under Vernon guarded the landing-place, blockaded Santiago, and while awaiting the arrival of the army amused itself by capturing prizes. After a while General Wentworth returned to the ships. He had done nothing; but he was thoroughly fatigued, unequal to further hardships, and asked to be taken away.

In 1743, after four years' service, Vernon returned home. He received the assurance of the Government that he retained their undiminished regard, and in token thereof he was chosen two years later to command in the Channel during the earlier days of the Forty-five. He had, however, contracted a rather suicidal habit of pamphleteering; and though there was much sound counsel in "Some Seasonable Advice from an Honest Sailor," and "A Specimen of Naked Truth from a British Sailor," it was proffered in a shape which could not fail to offend the administration. There was much in the Navy that needed reform, especially the position of the seamen. With his plain-spoken candour, his consuming haste and sterling honesty, Vernon could not stand tamely by a

silent inactivity. It is to be hoped that his criticism awoke the official conscience, and accelerated amendment, for it ended his service career.

Baffled by his coadjutors, and by those he had served, Edward Vernon retired "without place or title" into an oblivion which has shrouded the latter days of many another great man. But if human appreciation failed and the Admiral himself was forgotten the nickname which symbolized the affection of his men had already become part of the English language. The familiar word has been unconsciously treasured ever since, and loses no portion of its popularity.

It must be understood that the Admiral lived in days prior to the adoption of a naval uniform. It was open to all officers to give rein to their fancy in matters of garb, and Toby Smollett gives an amusing account of the second captain under whom he served. Captain Oakum, his first commander, was a terrible martinet. Captain Whiffle "appeared in everything the reverse." He was "a tall, thin, young man, dressed in this manner: a white hat, garnished with a red feather, adorned his head, from whence his hair flowed upon his shoulders in ringlets, tied behind with a ribbon. His coat, consisting of pink-coloured silk lined with white, by the elegance of the cut retired backward, as it were, to discover a white satin waistcoat embroidered with gold, unbuttoned in the upper part to display a brooch set with garnets, that glittered in the breast of his shirt, which was of the finest cambric, edged with rich Mechlin. The knees of his crimson velvet breeches scarcely descended so low as to meet his silk stockings, which rose without spot or wrinkle on his meagre legs, from shoes of blue Meroquin, studded with diamond buckles. . . . An amber headed cane hung dangling from his wrist. But the most remarkable part of his furniture were, a mask on his face, and white gloves on his hands." *

* That Smollett's highly coloured fashion-plate is not altogether imaginary is borne out by an authoritative writer who declares that the beau in question, on arriving at his station in the W. Indies, reported himself to the Commander-in-Chief in an array which would have done credit to the most exquisite and perfumed macaroni. Vernon received him in a costume which it would be flattery to describe as *negligé*. Taken somewhat aback by the appearance of his visitor he hastily slipped on his wig, and enquired to what he owed the

VERNON

Each to his taste! Admiral Vernon preferred a plain attire. He clad his small person in a serviceable material composed of silk and mohair, and known by the name of grogram. Old Grogram, suggesting itself to the wits of the fo'c'sle, quickly gave place to Old Grog, and this unceremonious appellation clung to the Admiral as long as he paced the quarter-deck. Everything that concerned the welfare of the sailors commanded his immediate attention. He lamented their hard-drinking as much as he regretted the need of the Press Gang. In the interest of the service he dosed the seamen's rum with a wholesome addition of water. The beverage thus concocted received from the drinkers the Admiral's own sobriquet, and Grog it has remained from that day to this.

Edward Vernon, deemed in his life unworthy of reward, fully deserves to be enshrined in the national remembrance as one of the best and the bravest of heroes. He has long borne the burden of another's fault; he has long suffered from the spite of a malicious genius who lived too near the events which he described to arrive at an impartial verdict. If by the injudicious expression of his own opinion Vernon himself contributed to the causes of his own downfall, let it be remembered that he was prompted by a desire to convince his country "that everything depends on our superiority at sea, and this we stand in danger of losing when we fail to retain the affection of our seamen."

pleasure of the call. On learning he exclaimed, "Gad so, I thought you were for sure a dancing master." The story, if true, speaks volumes for the way in which Vernon added to the number of his enemies.

ANSON

BORN 1697—DIED 1762

GEORGE ANSON came of a Staffordshire family that numbered among its connections a famous counsel who won renown in the Sacheverell trial and afterwards became Lord Macclesfield and Chancellor of England. George entered the service of his country in 1712. All the exciting events of the Spanish Succession were over, and for the most part the early career of the great Admiral was cast in the thirty years of peace that separated the Jacobite risings. But when he was twenty-one, fortune carried him into a battle of first-class celebrity, as welcome as it was isolated.

In addition to the Netherlands the Peace of Utrecht gave the Emperor Naples and the island of Sardinia. The Emperor had a mind to exchange Sardinia for the island of Sicily which had been handed to the Duke of Savoy; Sicily occupied a more commanding position and would round off his Italian possessions. Meanwhile Philip V, the French-born King of Spain, had found a disinterested and highly capable minister who reformed the whole government of the state, reorganized the finances, revived the army, and daily insisted that the land of the Philips must recreate a navy or perish. Spain rose again from the ashes of her dead past just as the Emperor's project came to a head.

The Emperor's device was a treaty violation, and Philip V thought that if any one were to transgress in the matter, he had priority of right, because the lands in dispute had all till recently belonged to Spain. He therefore took possession of Sardinia, and sent to Sicily an army of 30,000 men accompanied by a fleet of eighteen large ships and as many small ones. A landing was made

at Palermo, the capital, and when Palermo fell, the army marched against Messina, on the straits of the same name.

THE BATTLE OF CAPE PASSARO

JULY 31, 1718

By the very promptitude of his action Philip V focused the iniquity upon himself, and brought into the field against himself the other signatories to the terms of Utrecht. To the average Englishman he appeared lawlessly intent on grasping back the ancient possessions of Spain when Europe had her eyes averted. England at once sent out a fleet under Sir George Byng, who had received a knighthood for his share in the capture of Gibraltar, and a baronetcy for his services upon the sea in the crisis of 1715. His orders were to see that the Spaniards did not make illegal seizure of Sicily. The Admiral could not drive 30,000 soldiers from the walls of Messina, but the presence of the hostile fleet gave him power, and he demanded a two months' armistice. When this was refused, he stood to the south and treated the Spaniards as unceremoniously as Tromp had done in 1639.

With his flag in the *Barfleur*, Byng had under his orders twenty-one ships of the line. These not only outnumbered their opponents, but in the matter of armament and tonnage were in every respect superior. He did not therefore put himself to the trouble of forming the orthodox line, but ordered a general chase; and when he saw that the smaller ships of the enemy were running inshore, he detached Captain Walton with seven ships to pursue and disappoint them. Of the Spanish vessels, great and small, Sir George burnt one and captured no less than fourteen, including the flagship of Admiral Castañeta. Anson, who was serving as lieutenant in the *Montagu*, shared in the glory of the day and in the capture of the *Volante*; but it must be added that the great result was achieved with the minimum of trouble and small expenditure of blood.

The hero of the battle was the commander of the *Canterbury* whom Sir George sent to pounce upon the inshore frigates. Captain Walton took one ship of 60 guns, one of 54, one of 40, and one of 24: he burnt one of 54, two of 40, one of 30 guns,

one fire-ship, and two bomb-vessels. Having done so he indited the following—

TO ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE BYNG.

CANTERBURY, OFF SYRACUSE, Aug. 6, 1718.

SIR,—

We have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships and vessels which were upon this coast, the number as per margin.

I am, &c.,

GEORGE WALTON.

This epistle has been cited time and again as a model of laconic and pithy conciseness.*

Twenty-six vessels in all were accounted for. The Sicilian matter was finished at a single blow, and Sir George received an ovation on his return. He was raised to the peerage as Viscount Torrington, and was given by his sovereign a rich diamond ring as a mark of his personal esteem.†

Five years after Passaro, Anson received command of his first ship. It has been whispered that this preferment may be traced to the good offices of Lord Macclesfield. If this be so, then the country is indebted to the Chancellor for an unwitting boon of highest usefulness. From 1724 to 1737 Captain Anson was engaged almost continuously in watching the interests of the southern colonies of British North America. This gave him an unexampled opportunity of observing and studying the question which brought to a close the long period of peace. This singled him out for an independent command against the Spanish in America when the War of Jenkins' Ear broke out.

It was at first proposed that he should attack Panama from the sea with the idea of joining hands with Vernon across the

* It is a shame to spoil a good story, but Captain Walton really wrote quite a long letter which suffered curtailment at the hands of an unscrupulous editor.

† Sicily and Sardinia were exchanged after all. The Emperor converted his possessions south of the Papal States into the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the once Duke of Savoy became King of Sardinia. When, however, the War of the Polish Succession broke out (1733-35), and the Bourbon Kings of France and Spain buried their differences in a Family Compact, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was wrested from the Emperor and given to Charles, the third son of Philip V.

isthmus. But the country was hardly prepared for such extensive operations after her protracted slumber, and Anson's commission was not handed to him till June, 1740, by which time the development of the situation had modified the original scheme. Vernon was at the height of his success. Porto Bello had fallen. There was a prospect that all Spanish America would in a short time pass into the hands of the British, and the one thing necessary seemed the proper reinforcement of invincible Vernon.

The raid on the Pacific was not for that reason wholly abandoned. Drake had commenced operations at the Isthmus of Darien, and followed them up by a voyage to the Pacific. Vernon had repeated his isthmian exploits: Anson was instructed to work the Spaniards all the mischief he was able by sacking the towns of Western South America and capturing the vessels in the southern sea.

For this purpose he had assigned to him a squadron of six ships and some 1,500 men.

<i>Centurion</i> (Commodore)	60 guns,	506 men
<i>Gloucester</i>	50 "	374 "
<i>Severn</i>	50 "	300 "
<i>Pearl</i>	40 "	250 "
<i>Wager</i>	28 "	160 "
<i>Trial</i>	8 "	81 "

Victuallers, *Anna* and *Industry*.

THE VOYAGE OF CIRCUMNAVIGATION

SEPTEMBER, 1740, TO JUNE, 1744

Yet over wind and wave he had his will
Blistered, and buffeted, unbafted still.

Who hath so suffered, or so far hath sailed,
So much encountered, and so little quailed?

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

From the very outset misfortune marked the expedition for her own, and pursued it relentlessly. When Anson received his commission he found himself short of 300 sailors. He was instructed to pick them up at Portsmouth; but the Commodore's Chief was himself short-handed and produced no more than 170, thirty of whom were but lately discharged from hospital. The

remainder were never provided. His commission also assigned him an army; but in lieu thereof there were told off 500 men who had been invalided from the ranks, and were receiving outdoor relief from Chelsea Hospital. Of this gallant but unwilling band no more than 260 came aboard, and they came only because (unlike the happier minority) they were not in a position to use their legs in order to escape. Most of these wretched invalids were over sixty years of age, some had passed seventy, and one poor decrepit old creature had been grievously wounded in the Battle of the Boyne. To replace the fugitives, the distracted Commodore received 210 Marine recruits, raw and inefficient, scarcely able to handle a musket. He naturally entered a protest against handicaps so grave, but in the matter of the military even the First Lord was powerless to help.

It was on 18th September, 1740, that the little squadron, rather dismally set sail. Five weeks later they dropped anchor at Madeira where the Governor proved hospitable and communicative. He told them the Spaniards had sent forth a fleet for their destruction under Don José Pizarro. Welcome or not, this information cannot have surprised the Commodore, for the conspiracy of events which had delayed his start gave his enemies ample opportunity to discover his destination. In fact a week before his departure he had listened to the details of his own expedition from a home-returned traveller who had heard them all on the shores of the Pacific.

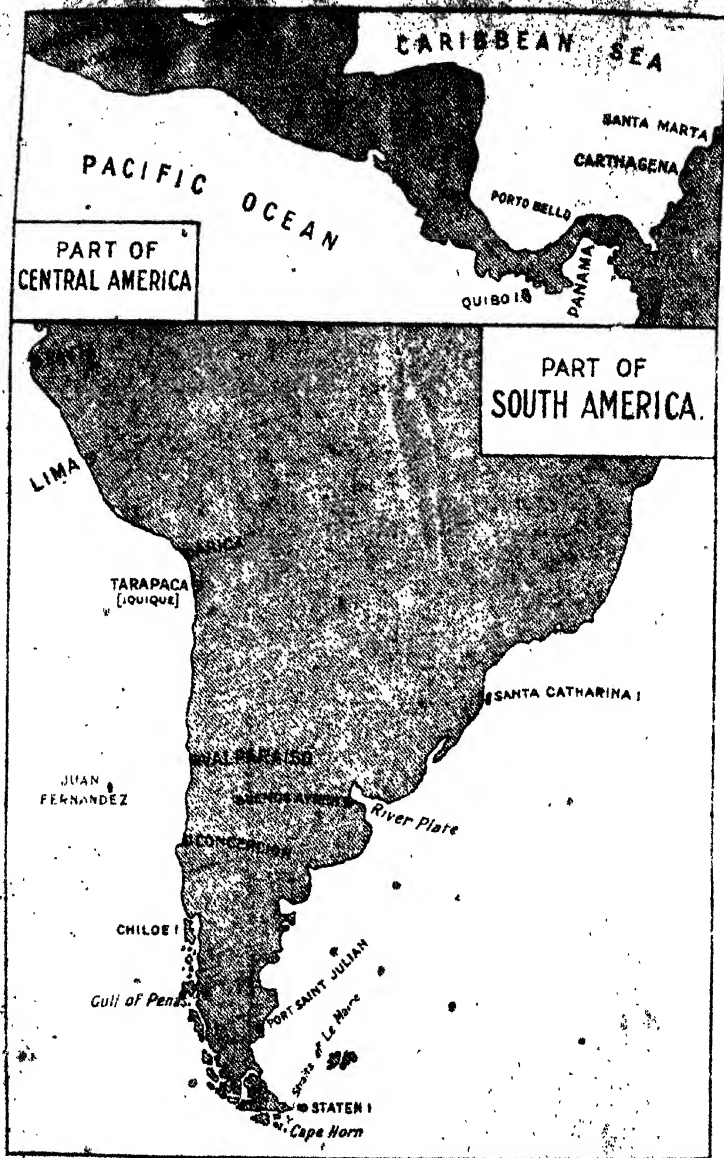
Don José, manfully intent upon his business, had indeed set out, and in the opening days of 1741 turned into the River Plate to re-provision. Long before this process was complete he heard to his annoyance that the cursed English were nearer than he supposed. With commissariat neglected, he set out at once to reach the Pacific before the invader. In attempting to weather Cape Horn he was tossed about the barren acres of foam. His ships were scattered; two were cast away, and the battered remnant were hurled back, and after enduring the agonizing pangs of famine, picked up again their moorings in the Plate. Had the Englishmen been able to guess the adventures of Don José, their minds would have been relieved of a burden of anxiety; but the menace of his proximity was ever with them to aggravate their distress.

The *Centurion* and her consorts made their second stop on the

coast of Brazil at the island of Santa Catharina. The shores of this friendly little spot proved doubly attractive that Christmas of 1740, for already there had appeared in the fleet the grim spectre of a fell disease which by its ravages alone would have made the journey memorable. While the invalids were removed to seek for health ashore, the ships were all subjected to a thorough cleansing the decks were scraped, the vessels smoked below, and every part washed with vinegar. As nothing seemed more certain than rough weather ahead, the sides were caulked, the masts secured, and the rigging overhauled.

[1741] It was the approach of the English that drove Don José from the Plate. As he left Buenos Ayres regretfully behind him, Anson also turned his ships towards the south. He soon found himself harried by storm-fiends, and though the *Centurion* suffered little discomfort, the *Trial* lost her mainmast, and the whole expedition till the end of February was detained in the port of St. Julian. On 6th March the threatening snowclad peaks of Tierra del Fuego told the mariners that they were approaching the Straits of Le Maire which separate Staten Island from the mainland. Greater part of the night was employed in bending new sails to the yards. The morning sky wore a pleasant face and induced a feeling of cheerfulness in all. Some began to scorn the pioneers who had brought home such woful tales of the wickedness of Cape Horn, and attributed their terrors and misfortunes to a want of skill rather than to any excessive inclemency of the elements.

These comfortable reflections were quickly dispersed. The ships were not yet through the Straits when the heavens blackened and blotted out the light. For a time it seemed that the *Trial* and the victuallers must suffer wreck upon the rocks of Staten Island, but at length the open sea was reached and the squadron were dancing as helplessly as the fallen leaves with autumn's blowing. At first it was only possible to scud to the eastward before the shrieking fury of the blast. When the gale showed any abatement the vessels struggled to the west; but the subsidence of the wind proved the harbinger of fog which threatened to separate the ships still more effectually. Storm succeeded storm, and in each renewal the tempest gathered strength. Hail, sleet and snow whipped the mariners with merciless insistence, and the penetrating cold froze the most willing hands. Every seam began to leak, and there was



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE ANSON'S VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD

ANSON

little sleep at night even for those who sought it. Top-sails had long been furled, and now the stout main-sail was ripped and torn like a sheet of unresisting calico. There was nothing for it but to drive under bare poles till the weather flattened to a calm. Though sore beset the squadron still kept together, drifting like scraps of flotsam on the waves.

When the storm dropped, and hands were busy bending new sails and repairing the rigging, a reckoning was taken, and to the surprise of all it was discovered that the squadron was no less than 20° west of the most westerly point of Tierra del Fuego. The Straits of Le Maire had been passed on 7th March. It was now 13th April. There had been intervals of calm, but hardly sufficient [it was thought] to make such westing. With a joyful heart the vessels turned to the north. The mist still obscured the horizon, but what matter! The goal was won. Thirty-six hours later the weather cleared, and the uplifting veil revealed the horrifying sight of a green and greedy shore under their lee, less than a league away. In the very nick of time the wind shifted to north-west, and the disappointed seamen turned again to the south, to the hurricane zone and the mountain waves.

In the second encounter the brave little band were scattered and met with varying adventures. The *Severn* and the *Pearl* were driven eastward round the Horn, and took no further part in the quest. The *Wager* took the ground in the Gulf of Penas and became a total wreck. The crew mutinied and found their way in the long-boat to Brazil. The captain and a few loyal hearts, after suffering incredible mishaps, at last reached the island of Chiloe. An account of their adventures may be found in the pages of John Byron, who at the time of the shipwreck was serving in the *Wager* as a midshipman. He lived to attain celebrity as an Admiral, and bequeathed his literary ability to the author of *Don Juan* and *Childe Harold*.* *

The *Centurion* having weathered the Horn a second time, struggled gamely northwards, ever pursued by westerly gales that threatened to dash her on the coast. So persistent were her efforts to gain an adequate margin of sea-room that when the latitude of Juan Fernandez was reached on 26th May, 1741, the

* His hardships were comparative.
To those related in my granddad's "Memories" — Brian.

island was nowhere to be seen. The Commodore declared he saw it glimmer in the western haze; but the rest were incredulous and persuaded him to run eastwards along the parallel. Two days' sailing brought them within view of the inhospitable coast and the gaunt grey heights of the Cordilleras. Sadly they retraced their steps. The wind mocked them; and the lost leagues were reclaimed with difficulty in nine long days.

Under normal conditions this delay would hardly call for mention, but the water was almost exhausted and the ship was suffering from an attack of scurvy unparalleled in the record of the sea.

Scurvy is a disease which attacks the badly-fed army and the siege-straitened garrison just as surely as the sailors on an old-time cruise. To-day, when the cure is well known, there are many naval surgeons who have never met a case; but it is still common in the poorer quarters of large towns. The seamen of Anson's day, ignorant of its cause, regarded the malady with superstition. The symptoms excuse them.

The sufferer from scurvy is overcome by lethargy and unwonted depression. He has no spirit left in him. He daily becomes more weak and daily more timorous. His blood declines at first to act in the normal way, and if no change for the better supervenes, it then begins to act abnormally. The patient already faint and dizzy is subjected to nose-bleeding; other forms of hemorrhage rob him of the last relics of his strength; and his limbs, no longer able to perform their functions, are discoloured as by bruises though none have been inflicted. The remedies are simple: fresh air, plenty of fresh water, fruit, the more acid the better, flesh foods, and vegetables, above all potatoes. These are of course unobtainable in ships long from harbour on a rock-bound coast in distant seas.*

On board the *Centurion* the ravages of the disease were attended by curious accompaniments. In some, who had been wounded years before, the wound reappeared, reopened and bled

* There is another cure, effective, easily carried, and discovered a century before the *Centurion* sailed. Unfortunately the efficacy of lime-juice or lemon-juice as a potent antidote had not received universal recognition in 1740, and was not in general use among His Majesty's ships till the days of Admiral Rodney.

afresh; while broken bones, long healed, were newly fractured. Many reclining in their hammocks would revive in spirit somewhat; but moved to another part of the ship, died immediately. Some in the mere act of descending from their hammocks died ere they reached the deck, and others would appear well enough to resume their work, only to drop lifeless as they stood before the mast. All the patients alike were afflicted with white-lipped terror and the sick-child's plaintiveness.

The disease declared its presence directly after the passage of Le Maire. Its victims, crying for quiet and craving for attention, were pillowed in the hurricane, and perforce bereft of kindly ministrations. Little wonder if the rate of mortality sickened the boldest. Of the *Centurion's* original 506, 292 had been committed to the deep, and the remaining 200 were all more or less affected. Had it not been for the officers, who suffered less and lent a willing hand, Juan Fernandez would never have been reached at all.

This small island, more than 400 miles from the coast of Chile, was discovered by the Spaniard whose name it bears before the time of Drake, but was not yet settled or inhabited. The Buccaneers had welcomed the spot as a base of operations against Spain, and here in the early days of the eighteenth century the famous Alexander Selkirk was marooned and remained "monarch of all he surveyed" until he was rescued in the year of Malplaquet.*

Juan Fernandez is of volcanic origin and very fertile. Its high hills are a refuge for innumerable wild goats, and the lower slopes clad with tree ferns are infested with pigs. All fruits and vegetables grow well, and the waters abound in fish. It is easy to imagine the delight of the poor mariners on first sighting such a paradise. It is pathetic to learn that those who got ashore first hurried back to the ship with a boat-load of grass which they knew would prove welcome. To enhance the pleasure of her arrival the *Centurion* was able to welcome the little *Trial* who made the island the same day. To the Commodore's enquiry Captain Saunders returned answer that of his 80 men the half had perished, and himself and four others alone were able to stand. [June 1741.]

* Defoe places Robinson Crusoe's isle on the other side of America near the mouth of the Orinoco.

The safe arrival of the *Trial* led the Commodore to hope that ere long the remainder of his squadron might also find the island. There were of course excellent reasons why the *Severn*, the *Pearl* and the *Wager* should not do so; but Anson knew no more of their movements than he did of Pizarro's. He was still by no means free from anxiety about the Spaniards. It was well known that the Pacific merchantmen avoided Juan Fernandez as the haunt of Buccaneers, yet the remains of camp-fires and other relics pointed to a recent visitation. It would be unpleasant to be caught at such a moment, when it was impossible to man the guns or navigate the ships.

Pending further arrivals, all were fully occupied in moving the sick ashore. Most of the patients were so ill that there was nothing to be done but to lower them to the boats as they lay in their hammocks. Even so many died from mere discomfort. The task was difficult because strong arms were few: its accomplishment gives an insight into that influence which it is well known that Anson exerted over his sailors. He not only commanded his officers one and all to assist in the work, but himself cheerfully took a part as sick attendant and lavished upon his men a tenderness which they repaid with idolatry. The larderers were disappointed at the number of goats brought in, but received several of those which Robinson Crusoe had caught and released with distinguishing ear-slits; one of them, an animal of most venerable aspect, with an exceeding majestic beard. Seals and sea-lions proved plentiful, and added variety to the menu in which they figured as mutton and beef.

On 21st June the look-outs discovered a sail on the horizon; but the mist cut her off, and nothing more was seen of her till the 26th when she was recognized as the *Gloucester*. Anson, guessing the cause of her tardy approach, sent a boat laden with water and provisions. The new-comer was in a far more desperate plight than the *Centurion* had been. Two-thirds of her crew were already dead, and of the survivors not a soul could stand except the officers. Even when she had received help the *Gloucester* could not reach the haven; and the wind proving contrary, instead of making headway drifted farther out to sea. On 9th July, nineteen days after her first appearance, she disappeared altogether, and the anxious watchers on the beach gave

her up as lost. A week later she appeared again, and making signals of distress received from the sympathetic Commodore the last of his precious boats with a freight of willing but rather weak-kneed helpers. Finally, on the 23rd July, more than a month after her first appearance, the poor plague-stricken vessel reached the anchorage. It is difficult to imagine any torture more heart-wrenching than this vain effort to reach a coveted and visible haven.

Every endeavour was now made for the general recovery of health. Though there was much that wanted doing in the ships, free permission to camp where they liked was given to the men, and just as the island flesh-pots began to pall, one of the victuallers reached the anchorage with welcome stores of bread and biscuit.

As soon as they recovered, the invalids came briskly back to work, but they were a tragic little band. Of the 961 men who had left England, no less than 626 had been called to their last account. No one could censure Anson if he hastened to carry home the sorry remnants of his fruitless expedition. But the Commodore knew not what it was to flinch.

By September the last traces of disease had disappeared, and under the genial smile and cheery encouragement of their leader the men were ready for anything. Opportunely a sail appeared, and the *Centurion*, feebly manned as she was, gave chase. The quarry escaped, but the *Centurion* discovered a second and made an easy capture. The *Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo* had a cargo of cloth, some trunks of wrought plate, and twenty-three chests of silver each weighing 200 pounds. Her people, astonished at the kindly entertainment of their captors, regaled the Commodore with news of interest. They told him of Pizarro's misadventure: they told him how a second squadron, equipped at Lima, had stretched between Concepcion and Juan Fernandez with intent to intercept him, and from the latter place had only been recalled as recently as 6th June. As he listened Anson realized the meaning of the camp-fires he had found, and as he remembered how he had reached the latitude of the island on 28th May only to embark on an involuntary journey to the mainland, he blessed heaven for a miraculous deliverance. When he enquired the reason for the recall of the sentries, he learned

that the Spaniards, convinced of his destruction, had laid up their warships and removed their embargo on Pacific shipping. Once more the galleons plied from port to port with childlike faith in their security.

All this was like new blood to the Commodore, and he ordered a little fleet to disperse in search of prey.

The *Centurion* hunted in company with her prize which Anson put under the charge of Lieutenant Philip Saumarez. After a while they sighted two sails which on closer acquaintance proved to be the *Trial*, proud as a bantam, with the *Arranzazu* in shackles at her side. The Spaniards incredulous that such a tiny craft could ever have weathèred the Horn, had yet surrendered to her snappy little ordnance. But the *Trial* had fought her last fight. She had sprung her mainmast and her foremast; and Anson ordered Captain Saunders to scuttle her, and man the *Arranzazu*, re-named the *Trial's* prize, out of which he had obtained £5,000. The three ships now sailed in company northwards to pick up the *Gloucester*. On the way the *Centurion* swooped down on the *Santa Teresa de Jesus* which was found to contain a valuable cargo but little plate. The *Gloucester* had been ordered to take a position somewhere between Lima and Panama, while the others cruised between Lima and Valparaiso. As the augmented squadron approached the neighbourhood of Payta they sighted another prize which Lieutenant Brett captured almost single-handed in the *Centurion's* barge. She was deep-laden with steel, iron, wax, pepper, cedar-planks, snuff, rosaries, European bale-goods, powder-blue, cinnamon and Romish indulgences. From this universal provider Anson learned that Payta was well worth a visit, and he determined the same evening to deliver an attack. [November, 1741.]

Payta was little more than an assemblage of leaf-thatched bungalows in a barren and dry land where no rain ever fell. It had, however, a useful anchorage; and to the Spaniards engaged in the long journey from Lima to Panama it seemed worth while to establish there a base of supplies and a fort of eight guns to protect them. By a promise to release his prisoners in the event of success, Anson obtained two trusty guides. He then selected a little band of sixty men with Lieutenant Brett to command them, and sent them ashore under cover of darkness.

The alarm was quickly raised, but as quickly the invaders changed their manner of approach. With one accord they shrieked and screamed at the top of their voices, and the hideous hubbub was further intensified by the roll of drums which certain thoughtful members of the party had brought with them. The host of Midian was not more surprised than the sleepy inhabitants of Payta. As they turned out of bed and raced for the open without waiting even to dress themselves, they assured each other that the countrymen of Drake, thousands in number, were coming to eat them up. At the Governor's house some brave men made a show of resistance, but it was quickly overcome; and the holders of the fort early discovered discretion to be the better part of valour. Moving at will in an abandoned town, Brett transferred the entire treasure from the Customs House and public buildings into the fort, while his men amused themselves by raiding the houses for the neglected finery of the half-clad citizens.

When Anson arrived in the harbour at seven o'clock in the morning, Brett rowed out to meet him in a boat ballasted with dollars and decorated with church plate. For the next two days the Englishmen were engaged in removing all that was valuable and serviceable from Payta to the fleet; while the enemy mustered their forces on the hills snarling angrily when they discovered the ridiculously insignificant force that had turned them out of hearth and home. Though many of his prisoners were unwilling to leave him, Anson had them all conveyed to a place of safety; and then instructed Brett to anoint all but the churches with a devilish mixture of resin and tar. When this was done, fire was set to the windward houses; and with ships replenished in every particular the Commodore departed on further quests, while the enemies of his country stood forlornly gazing at a smouldering heap of ashes.

Shortly afterwards the *Centurion* came up with the *Globemaster*. She also had spent her time wisely and captured two small prizes. The first declared specie to the value of £7,000; the second was more modest and declared a cargo of cotton. As, however, the crew were engaged in eating pigeon-pie out of silver dishes, their remarks were not received in a spirit of truth, and a search among the cotton resulted in the discovery of £12,000 more.

The richest and most valuable prize the world afforded in 1741 was the Acapulco galleon.

The Spaniards in the Philippines collected in the town of Manila all those commodities which were most acceptable to Spain, in the bazaars of India and the seaports of China; spices of course, but silk goods especially, silk stockings [about 50,000 pairs per annum], calicoes and chintzes, porcelain, filigree, and other choice productions of the metal-worker. The ship that bore this priceless cargo was often as large and well-armed as an English first-rate. She carried on board a general who wore the standard of Spain at the main-topgallant masthead; she carried also a formidable company, sometimes as many as 1,200 men, seldom less than half that number. She left Manila in July, and worked her way northwards into the region of the Westerlies. The voyage was a long one, but the galleon generally arrived at Acapulco in the middle of January.* About middle-March, when her cargo was landed and had undergone inspection, a twin-galleon laden with money set out on the return voyage and flew back to Manila before the end of June on the wings of the easterly Trades. On the voyage from Acapulco the vessel mounted all her guns; on the way to Mexico a bulky cargo partially disarmed her. Westward bound the galleon was doubly worth capturing and doubly difficult to capture.

[1742.] Anson leaving Payta in November watered at Quibo in December and regaled his men with a diet of turtle, which proved plentiful and easy to catch. On resuming the journey bad weather was encountered, and the latitude of Acapulco was not reached until the end of January. At first it was thought that the treasure-seekers had arrived in the nick of time; but after chasing a prairie fire for a whole night, they discovered that the ship was out in her bearing; and when in February the harbour was made, it was of course discovered that the galleon was safely ensconced. From nigger-boys they learned the ordered regularity of the Trans-Pacific trade, hitherto unknown to them, and lay in ambush for

* Acapulco has a splendid harbour, quite the best on the Pacific coast of Mexico, but the place is dreadfully unhealthy. It was practically deserted save for the brief period when the galleon was unloading. Then the merchants crowded in from every part of Spanish America to buy up the oriental imports.

the *vis-à-vis*. But a *techo* had convinced them that their presence was betrayed and an embargo set upon the treasure ships.

There was nothing to be gained by further delay, and as water was running out Anson sailed to Chequetan. Here he had fresh supplies, and fetched a resolve to cross the Pacific and waylay the galleon on the farther side. Because the weather of the China Seas demanded the services of every man, and because his company was sufficiently reduced, Anson scuttled all the prizes, and with the *Centurion* and *Gloucester* only set sail at once for the Canton River, there to refurbish and plan his ambushade. [May, 1742.]

The accepted rule of the time instructed the seafarer to cross the Pacific along the thirteenth or fourteenth parallel in order to secure the full benefit of the Trades. Pinning his faith to this misleading theory Anson fought his way into a region of calms,* which kept him prisoner for seven weeks. This was a serious mischance, for the ships were too crazy for a protracted voyage, and once again the scurvy appeared and filled their cup of misery to the brim. The *Gloucester* was the first to drag. Her mainmast went by the board, and the *Centurion* stood by and helped her to rig up a jury. More precious time was lost. At last so tired grew the weary ship that the *Centurion* had to tow her. Then the storm arose and parted them. When at length it flattened the *Gloucester* was at her last gasp. Her masts were past repair; there were seven feet of water in her hold; and her sickly company were not in a position to man the pumps. Under the circumstances there was no choice, and Anson gave orders to remove from the doomed ship all that the *Centurion* could carry, and set the bulk afire.

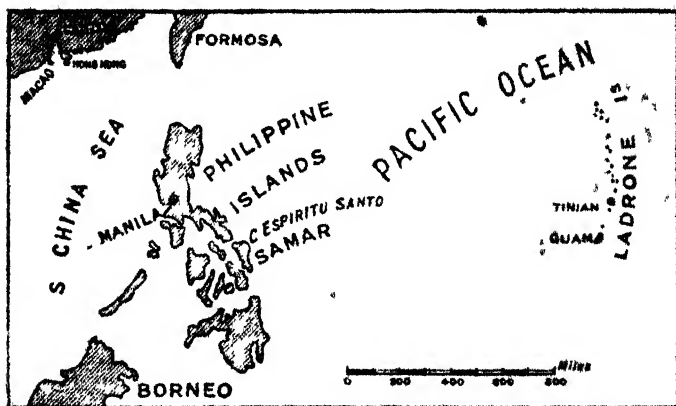
Of the eight ships that had left England two years before there now remained the *Centurion* alone; and she was so leaky that she had to be coaxed to float, so pestilence-haunted that those who had health enough to think imagined themselves in the throes of a hideous nightmare.

Towards the end of August the wished-for land rose green through the haze, and the *Centurion* brought up within hail of those thievish islands in which Magellan had died, and which his

* During the northern summer the Trade wind belt shifts to the north of the fourteenth parallel.

mariners had christened the Ladrões. Off Tinian Ulysses and his much-tried comrades found a Spanish barque. Her captain declared that he was engaged in jerking meat for the garrison at Guam, the largest island in the group, and that selected by the Acapulco galleon as her first port of call. The barque was annexed; and her crew safely bestowed.

Tinian was found to be uninhabited, to bear abundantly oranges, lemons, limes and breadfruit; and to be lavishly endowed with fountains at which all manner of cattle quenched their thirst. The scurvy patients numbered the horrifying total of 128. Twenty-two died the moment they were moved; but the rest were safely



THE PHILIPPINES AND LADRONES

carried to the isle of rest, and it was astonishing to see how rapidly they mended. Anson insisted on bearing his full share in the hospital work, but when all his children were cared for, quite overcome at last, the gallant Commodore himself gave out. A tent was erected for him, and he was soon by loving attentions nursed back to health.

Meanwhile Saumarez took command of the handful who still retained sufficient strength to reef and furl. At the Commodore's direction the anchor tackle was strengthened and the yards lowered; for the time of the equinoctial gales drew nigh, and the good ship swung in an open roadstead.

Unfortunately this admirable foresight was insufficient to save the *Centurion* from pursuing furies. The hurricane rose on a pitchy night; the sea boiled with rage, tossed the long-boat, which was moored astern, against the Commodore's gallery, and dashed it to splinters against the taffrail. No boat could live in such a sea; and when the bewildered mariners fired guns to warn those on shore of the peril, their bright flashes paled before the lightning, and before the thunder their voices were mute. The bow anchors parted; and though the sheet anchor was shot out with all speed, the ship glided swiftly over unfathomable depths.

When the party on shore were able in the light of morning to survey the aspect of the sea, no *Centurion* was to be found. She was gone; "to the bottom," some said, but the Commodore said no, she had parted her cables. Would she return? they asked him. Of course she would, he replied, though she would probably make her way to China, and keep them waiting while she refitted. In a moment of unbearable suspense, he rose as always to the occasion, and never for a moment lost his outward composure. He behaved to all his men like an elder brother; calmed their fears, kept them amused, and insisted that the Spanish barque should be sawn in two and lengthened, so that they could get to China on their own account if the *Centurion* loitered over long upon her way. Inwardly he felt an unshakable conviction that the last of his squadron was underneath the waves, and the little band about him incarcerated in a sea-girt prison where the English never came. Even if the *Centurion* reached a friendly port, obtained what she required, and came again to them, she was unlikely to return before the Spaniards on Guam arrived to look for their furnisher of meat. After that—the galleys!

The weeks crept by; one week, two, three, and still the Commodore, axe in hand, worked like a Trojan at the barge, as if she really could carry them all to China. He put his own spirit into every worker, though as a concession he allowed one or two of the belated invalids to keep watch for the ship upon the heights. At last upon a red-letter day in mid-October, perhaps the happiest day in all the cruise, one of the watchers broke through the fern trees, and panting with excitement, exhausted with sheer eagerness, gasped out, "The Ship!—the Ship!" A frenzy seized the party. They leapt and shrieked. They shouted in ecstasy.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

Even Anson for the first time on record lost his self-control, and hurling his axe at the nearest inanimate object, cried for very joy. And when they got him on board, what cheers they gave! cheers for home, and cheers for England, and three times three for the heart of gold who enslaved their wills and led them round the world.

About the middle of November [1742] the *Centurion* arrived at the Portuguese settlement of Macao at the mouth of the Canton River. Here the weather-beaten travellers found themselves in the midst of friends, and received among other items of news the glad tidings that the *Severn* and the *Pearl* had won home at last, and not gone down off the Horn. The Commodore sent Captain Saunders in a Swedish ship to carry despatches to England, and other officers availed themselves of permission to accompany him. The friendly Portuguese were not as helpful as they desired to be. They purchased their own supplies from the Chinese, and could only advise the Commodore to do the same. Fruitless interviews with dilatory mandarins resulted, and though Anson bridled his temper and did his best to spur the authorities, it was not till April, 1743, that the *Centurion* was careened, overhauled, refitted and reprovisioned.

[1743.] Delay and difficulty would have been indefinitely prolonged had his hosts been aware that Anson intended to capture the galleon before he left the Pacific. Their interest in her safety was second only to that of Spain. But the Commodore announced his intention of sailing for Batavia *en route* for England. The dwellers in Canton and Macao never for a moment doubted that so sorely tried a mariner would naturally desire to return home.

Anson sailed from China unsuspected. He had on board all manner of communications for Europe, but he made at once for the hunting ground, and announced his purpose to the wide-eyed company, who in spite of sundry additions made at Macao numbered only 227, many of them boys. There were not wanting those who felt convinced that the Acapulco galleon was far too strong a ship to be approached in their present condition; but Anson was in his element combating a difficult situation. He chaffed the discontented and rallied the downhearted. It was true, he admitted, that according to the stories the galleon was

so strongly built that a broadside rebounded from her side; but he would prove such stories false. He would reserve his fire until he was within pistol-shot; and then his cannonade would crash through both the galleon's sides, instead of rolling harmlessly off one. By these and similar arts he restored confidence, and so thoroughly satisfied were all that, in the coming contest, victory would immediately declare itself, that when Anson on one occasion enquired what had become of the sheep he had purchased in Macao, his servant was obliged to remind him that the mutton was being saved for the night the Spanish general dined on board.

The Acapulco galleon touched at no port of call after leaving Mexico until she came to Guam in the Ladrones. Here she took in supplies of wood, water and other provisions, and ran to Cape Espiritu Santo in Samar, of the Philippines. Here by a system of fire signals she was warned whether or no the coast was clear. Anson resolved to take up his station off Cape Espiritu Santo, sufficiently removed from land to disappoint the spies. Arriving off the headland on the last day of May he at once took in his topgallants, edged away from shore and waited. Meantime he paid special attention to an exercise which throughout the cruise he had never neglected. Unceasingly he had his men at quarters and worked the guns. He made a speciality too of small-arm practice, hanging a target at the yard-arm and offering rewards for the most successful marksmanship.

On the last day of June the *Nuestra Señora de Cavadonga* appeared, and the *Centurion* cleared for action. As she had not sufficient numbers adequately to man the guns, Anson allotted two bombardiers to each for loading purposes, and subdivided the remainder of the crew into gangs of ten, whose business it was to go from gun to gun, and running them out, to fire them. The use of broadsides was precluded; but Anson did not regret this, for the Spaniards had acquired a habit of throwing themselves flat on the decks when exposed to periodic fire, putting in their own mischief between-whiles; the unceasing annoyance of an intermittent cannonade promised to upset their dainty habits. Any fear that the *Señora* might make a run for it was soon dispelled when "she buttoned up her head-dress" and hove to awaiting her antagonist. Seeing this Anson selected thirty of his prize musketeers, put them in his tops, and issued his final orders.

When the battle began the *Centurion*, choosing the leeward station to prevent her adversary's escape, shot past her, and lay on the *Cavendish's* bow. This position proved singularly effective, for the Spaniards could only bring a small number of their guns to bear, while the width of the English ports enabled the gunners to train their pieces at the requisite angle. The topmen were the first to distinguish themselves, for their unerring aim soon emptied the enemy's tops, and then made the *Señora's* quarter-deck uninhabitable. Early in the fight a fire breaking out in the Spanish hammock nets created some confusion in their ranks; but the flames were at last got under—much to Anson's relief!

The *Señora* mounted some 64 guns and counted on the help of a company that outnumbered the *Centurion's* men by more than two to one; but mortality was heavy among them, and the waverers needed the example of Captain Montero and his gallant officers. Every one, however, who set foot on the Spanish quarter-deck was instantly killed or wounded from Anson's tops; and when the *Centurion* worked her way alongside and plied her foe with grape, the carnage grew appalling, and the Spanish flag came down. The *Centurion*, thanks to her perfect handling, lost but twenty men, of whom but two were killed.

As Anson received the congratulations of his officers, one of his lieutenants whispered in his ear that his own ship was ablaze, and the fire was near to the powder magazine. The Commodore received the news with a placidity which suggested that the communication had reference to the mutton, or some topic even less interesting. He picked out his coolest hands, gave them clear and rapid instructions in a collected undertone, and the fire was mastered.

The galleon being taken, the next task was to secure the plunder and the prisoners. Both were removed to the *Centurion*, where the Commodore would have them under his own eye. Lieutenant Saumarez was promoted to the command of the prize. The treasure amounted to 1,313,843 dollars, and 35,682 ounces of virgin silver. Anson himself reckoned that during the course of his journey he had despoiled his enemies of no less than a million pounds sterling, not counting the loss sustained in the tragic end of Pizarro's squadron. Of this nearly half was safely in his keeping.

The prisoners as they came aboard and learned for the first time the insignificant numbers of the enemy, showed a dangerous spirit, and obliged Anson to adopt measures repugnant to his humanity. With the exception of the officers all the Spaniards were stowed away in the hold. To make security doubly sure, the hatchways that led upwards to the lower deck were temporarily elongated to the upper deck by a wooden funnel which conveyed the fresh air downwards, but offered a peculiar difficulty to any would-be climber. Lest any, however, should dream of an ascent, at the mouth of each funnel four swivel guns were ready loaded; and a sentry mounted guard to fire them at a moment's notice. Every man went armed, and so great was the peril that none of the officers undressed on turning in. The reader will not be surprised to hear that Anson gave up his own cabin to the wounded Spanish commander, nor perhaps that he stationed a sentry outside the door. It will easily be understood that a residence in the hold was something lacking in the niceties of hygiene. The marvel is that any of the unfortunate prisoners lived in its fetid atmosphere. It was remarked when at last they were released that they had certainly "suffered a sea-change," and looked more like skeletons than men of flesh and blood.

The *Centurion* entered the Canton River for the second time towards the end of July. Her reception was not cordial. The Chinese were put in an awkward position. Here was a ship, manifestly in good fighting trim, and her hold was full of Spaniards with whom the Celestials did much trade. It was dangerous to offend Anson by refusing his demands; to satisfy them would alienate the best of customers. Furthermore, there was much to arouse their suspicions in this new variety of foreign devil. Why had he not gone home according to declared intention? How had he captured all these prisoners with his ridiculous handful of men? If he had really conquered them, why had he not put them all to death? Why had he omitted so obvious a detail? As a preliminary to further negotiations, they demanded the release of their commercial allies. Anson very gladly acceded to their wishes, and thereby delivered himself of an intolerable burden; but he made demur, and feigned regret, making his acquiescence an argument for the instant satisfaction of his claims. The mandarins nodded, and departing forgot their promises.

At last the question of supplies became vital, and when eight weeks had passed, and as many embassies had gone ashore in vain, Anson handed the command of his ship to "Payta" Brett,* and himself braved the perils of a journey to Canton. The Viceroy of course was not at home; but in a convenient moment Canton burst into flames, and [in spite of the idols brought out to subdue them] was in danger of total destruction. Anson called in the handy man, and by the ease with which he mastered the fire proved his Celestial origin. The grateful Viceroy then emerging assured the Commodore that even the fire brought a blessing in its train, for it had acquainted him of the *Centurion's* arrival in port, a fact of which till that very moment he had not the shadowiest intimation [!].

The necessary orders were at length given. The prize was sold for a meagre 6,000 dollars to the merchants of Macao. The *Centurion* raised anchor at the end of the year, spent a pleasant Easter at Cape Town, and dropped anchor at Spithead on 15th June, 1744, after an absence of nearly four years.

Anson's voyage round the world lacks the originality that distinguished Drake's. Though it added to British knowledge of the Pacific, it produced no startling geographical discovery. In martial glory it has been surpassed. In store of glittering prize it must yield precedence to the pillage of Elizabethan days. Yet it remains, and will remain, without an equal in the annals of the sea. Heroism, pluck, endurance, perseverance, seem but soiled labels for the virtues that Anson carried. In the blackest depths of adversity he never for one moment abandoned the hope of accomplishing his purpose. So motherly was his compassion that he felt the death of every man as a personal loss; but he turned to the survivors and infused new courage into them by the intense reality of his faith. In all points he proved himself a leader who never turned back except to rally the downhearted

* A melancholy interest attaches to this appointment. When Anson reached home he asked the Admiralty to confirm his grant. The circumnavigator had done much for national credit, and this was his only request. The Admiralty, scenting an irregularity, returned an emphatic and blunt refusal; but at the same time they sent Anson himself his commission as Rear-Admiral of the Blue. Without a moment's delay the great man sent it back.

with kind encouragement, or console the dying with tender ministrations. Through peril, storm and pestilence onward he went, unbuffed, unruffled, undismayed.

The mischief done to the Spaniards was considerable; but even if Payta had not been sacked, even if the *Cavadonga* and her sisters had never been taken, the expedition could not fail to prove of incomparable worth. The length of the voyage, the diversity of the accidents, the privations endured and the work accomplished, provided a school of seamanship without example. Never perhaps has similar venture produced such a shining galaxy of stars. Saunders and Saumarez, Byron, Brett, Keppel, Hyde Parker, Denis and Campbell all worked their way to the very top of their profession. They wrought for England noble deeds and won illustrious fame.

On his return home Anson found his country involved in new difficulties. France had joined Spain in opposition to her old enemy, and in the first great encounter on the sea England had suffered an inglorious setback at the hands of the allies [below pp. 195-202]. This unforeseen occurrence led to a change of government, and the new ministry not only advanced Anson to be Rear-Admiral of the White, but invited him to take a seat at the Board of Admiralty.*

From this point onwards Anson becomes not so much one of the principal actors in the piece, as stage, business and acting manager. Occasionally he comes forward as in the First Battle of Finisterre to show how things should be done; but for the most part his voice is seldom heard, though almost everything depends on him, and though to him belongs so much of the credit for loudly applauded performances.

The first year of Anson's tenure of office was one of universal gloom and despondency—"Black Friday" year, the year of Fontenoy and Prestonpans. From one quarter only came a gleam of light, which beckoned Englishmen to their true destiny. In 1758 the gate of the St. Lawrence was forced by the American colonists. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland the drawbridge and

* Compare with this the blundering action of the discredited ministry.

barbican, had been ceded at the Peace of Utrecht; but Cape Breton Isle still blocked the way like a portcullis, and Louisburg was its key. The New Englanders captured Louisburg, and the door of Canada flew open. This success was largely due to Captain Warren [1703-52], a close friend of Anson, with whom he had served upon the American station in the years preceding the outbreak of war. Horace Walpole says of Warren that he "was as rich as Anson, and as absurd as Vernon;" the latter remark meaning that Warren did not hesitate to attack that neglect of the Navy for which the father of Horace must be held responsible.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF FINISTERRE

MAY 3, 1747

The capture of Louisburg was a serious disaster for France, and the national determination to recapture the place is intelligible enough when it is remembered that England had gained no victory on the sea as she had done in previous wars. In 1747 accordingly a squadron was fitted out, and put under the command of Admiral de la Jonquière. Reinforcements for East Indian seas, under Captain de St. George, were also in preparation, and it was arranged that the two squadrons should bear one another company as far as Cape St. Vincent. The armada, thirty-eight vessels in all, comprised nine battleships, five Indiamen capable of standing in the line, and a score of transport vessels.

News of these dispositions reaching England, a strong squadron was collected and put at the disposal of Anson who hoisted his flag in the *Prince George*, and very naturally designated Warren as his second in command. Peirce Brett went with him, Saumarez too and Peter Denis, circumnavigators all, and captains courageous now. The good old ship herself was there; nor is the list of notables complete without the name of one who craved for battle with consuming thirst.

Edward Boscawen [born 1711], third son of Lord Falmouth, was destined to earn from the great Earl of Chatham the flattering encomium: "When I apply to other officers respecting any expedition I may chance to project, they always make difficulties: you find expedients." Boscawen had been through Vernon's campaign. He destroyed the fortifications at Porto Bello, and

ANSON

at Cartagena was well to the front in the assault on the Chica batteries. On his return he was posted to the *Dreadnought*, and though it was not in this ship that he achieved any of his great exploits, it was from her that he derived the nickname which clung to him all through life. "Old Dreadnought" was never taken off his guard, and looked danger straight in the face with an assurance that became proverbial. During his *Dreadnought* command he was awakened in the dead of night by the officer of the watch. "There are two large ships, sir, which look like Frenchmen, bearing down upon us. What are we to do?" "Do?" said the Captain, turning out and hurrying on deck in his night-shirt, "do? damn 'em, nght 'em!"

Anson had a fleet of fourteen fine ships, a force with which he might very well hope to annihilate the enemy, if the enemy could but be found. To lay an ambushade in the Straits of Dover would have been easy, for the narrowness of the pass rendered a meeting almost inevitable. There was no sea-gap off Finisterre.

The man who has arranged to meet another in a certain crowded street and has omitted to state the exact particular spot, would like to retain his self-respect by standing still, and yet is tempted to rush about on a wild and fruitless search. Anson found himself in a similar predicament. The enemy might sidle past if he drew up his forces off the Cape: if he carved them into detachments and scattered them, there was little chance of the overwhelming victory which he craved. Happily the perfection of his instinct led him to introduce a new fighting disposition which solved the problem before him, and placed him in the very front rank of British fleet commanders.

Without interfering with the power of his ships to move in line ahead or line abreast, he taught them "to regulate themselves by bearing on some particular point of the compass from one another." By this means the line at once assumed elastic properties. The ships might be stationed at intervals of two miles and proceed in skirmishing order without sacrifice of mutual co-operation; they would still be ready on the moment to move up into line of battle, those nearer the enemy marking time, those more removed making sail.*

* This simple expedient did not exhaust the possibilities of the *Line of Bearing*. The Manœuvre proved as fruitful as St. Venant's tactics.

If it be supposed that the French were advancing from Rochefort which bears E.N.E. from Finisterre, then Anson (with his ships in line abreast at one mile intervals and bearing from each other N.N.W. and S.S.E.) had a line thirteen miles in length at right angles to La Jonquière's advance, so that there could "not remain the least probability for the enemy to pass by undiscovered."

The enemy did not pass by undiscovered. They were sighted, chased and overtaken. Finding himself outmanœuvred La Jonquière drew up his line of battle as if he meant to fight to the death. Anson followed suit. But while he did so, he noticed that the Frenchmen shook out their top-gallants. Such a needless preliminary to a combat à l'outrance roused his suspicions. The day was already far advanced. The enemy meant to waste the rest of it in sparring and slip away in the darkness. Without hesitation Anson hauled down the signal for the line, and ordered a general chase. He meant to take the French battle-fleet home with him as he had taken the *Cavadonga*.

The French fought nobly, putting themselves in front of their transports who winged their way from the field. One or two of the Indiamen, whom La Jonquière had put into his fighting line had little relish for the fray; but as they turned to fly Anson despatched Brett and Saumarez after them, and it need scarcely be added that these worthies brought them back, and half a dozen of the transports to boot. Meanwhile Warren in the *Devonshire* engaged La Jonquière's flagship the *Sérieux*, and after a splendid resistance from the old warrior at last brought down her flag; not, however, until La Jonquière had been badly wounded at a moment when he ran through the body one of his own men, who was prematurely hauling down the colours.

The *Centurion* enjoyed herself immensely and was the first British vessel in action. Not far behind her came Captain Boscawen in the *Namur*. The relentless bull-dog pertinacity with which he attacked the *Invincible* received universal commendation. Captain de St. George met him with a valour little inferior, and capitulated only when Boscawen's endeavours were seconded by the admirable exertions of Warren. Boscawen was badly wounded in the shoulder, but recovered for greater things. The value of his example may be gauged from a characteristic utterance of Horace Walpole, who says that this "most obstinate

member of a most obstinate family "never forgave Anson because he usurped all the credit for a victory which by right belonged to himself.

The casualties were heavy. The French suffered 700 and the English about a third of the number. La Jonquière was too severely hurt to make a surrender in person. In his place Monsieur de St. George came aboard the flagship, and charmed his enemies by his cheerful bearing in adversity. Stepping forward to the silent Englishman he bared his head, and delivering his sword with a low bow he added with whimsical chivalry, "Monsieur, vous avez vaincu l'invincible et la gloire vous suit!" Anson had not only taken the *Invincible* and the *Gloire*, but his dream had come true. He had taken the entire French fleet and triumphantly he carried it home.

With 4,000 prisoners to dispose of, Anson found himself more hardly pressed than on that happy day off Cape Espiritu Santo. The convoy escaped under shadow of the night; but the treasure taken amounted to £300,000, and being landed at Portsmouth required no less than twenty waggons to carry it to London. It was trundled up with much ceremony through the southern counties, and caused as much excitement as a similar scene in the days of Blake.

The First Battle of Finisterre was very complete and very satisfactory. In Anson's own opinion it was the "best stroke that has been made upon the French since La Hogue." The stroke was desperately needed to rehabilitate the naval prowess of the country. The victor received a warm welcome from the delighted King, who thoroughly appreciated the importance of this victory after the nightmare that was past. The gallant Admiral was created Baron Anson of Soberton in the county of Southampton; his second in command became Sir Peter Warren, and Boscawen was made Rear-Admiral of the Blue.

• • AT THE ADMIRALTY. 1744-1762

From his fight with Monsieur de La Jonquière Anson returned to his seat at the Admiralty. His unexampled experience and transcendent ability marked him out as the very man for the post, while the uniformity of his success and his immense wealth enabled

him to fill his chair with ease and dignity. In the year after Pinisterre his marriage with the daughter of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke not only established a connection which daily ripened into the most cordial and reciprocal friendship, but assured the Admiral's position in the Council Chamber. So entirely did he win the confidence of his superiors that they abandoned to him the entire direction of the department while he occupied a subordinate position; and in 1751 (three years after the conclusion of peace) he became First Lord himself.

Coming to the board in 1744 and retaining office till 1762, Lord Anson served his country for no less than seventeen years in a way that no other man alive could have done. The occasion, moreover, was opportune. England was on the verge of that war [1756-63] which more than any other contributed to make the British Empire what it is. When the Seven Years' War broke out Anson had been busy for five years upon a task for which his genius was peculiarly suited. The Byng catastrophe, for which he can hardly be held responsible, drove him temporarily from office, but when Pitt became Prime Minister, Anson was recalled to the helm, and continued to preside there until the last year of the war, when the unexampled preparations necessary for the Spanish campaign sapped the vitality from a system already undermined by early hardships.

Anson's close connection with Pitt, and Pitt's dictatorial way have given rise to a legend which makes the Admiral a mere tool in the hands of the Great Commoner. In the strictly literal sense Anson was a tool, and Pitt knew how to make use of his abilities; but it is not necessary to believe that Anson was ever guilty of abdicating his proper functions. Mr. Pitt, with his eagle eye and fiery oratory, had a terrible way with him. By the vehement energy of his invective he crushed those who thwarted him, and on the lips of the most eloquent the retort died unuttered. Who could venture to quibble with the truth when it was uttered with the rock-rending thunder of a Danton, and the soul-inspired patriotism of a Washington!

One day in the Council Chamber Pitt delivered one of his most eloquent and convincing appeals on a matter relating to the Navy. Every one was overcome, convinced, that the statements to which he had listened were as accurate as the proposition that he sup-

ported was sagacious. But the captor of *Canadongas* was of an entirely different opinion. Rising therefore he said: "My Lords, Mister Secretary is very eloquent, and has stated his own opinion very plausibly. I am no orator, and all I shall say is that he knows nothing at all of what he has been talking about." The quietly delivered anti-climax from one whom Pitt trusted implicitly in naval matters proved as efficacious as the *Line of Bearing*.

There was indeed good reason why Pitt should extend to Anson a confidence unusual with him, for every day saw the inauguration of some administrative reform based upon the teaching of experience. Think of him in those days of June, 1740, when he hungered to start and found himself encumbered by a handful of invalids in place of the army he was expecting. Think of him when the scurvy seized his expedition and he discovered to his annoyance some of the devilish tricks of the victualling department. Think of him again when he struggled across the Pacific striving all he knew to drag the dying *Gloucester* along with him. It is easy then to understand why he organized the Marines for the first time on a proper and stable basis, bringing them directly under the control of the Admiralty, and removing them for ever from the jurisdiction of the military arm: why he instituted annual inspections of the dockyards to check the maladministration which had for so long rendered these places mere sinks of iniquity: why he standardized the fittings of vessels so that the various parts of a warship's mechanism might be similar in every detail as regards ships of a similar class.

The master who had trained every officer in the *Centurion* to such a pitch of excellence that one and all rose to the highest command was the man of all others to choose the right commanders in the most fruitful of England's wars; and those who urge that Byng proves an exception to the rule will admit that as senior officer upon the flag list, it would have been a gratuitous insult to pass him by.

No part of Anson's organizing work was more important than the boldness with which he delivered the science of naval warfare from the stagnation into which it had fallen in the forty years which intervened between the age of Rooke and the age of Vernon.

The formulation of laws and regulations for the guidance of

those commanding the force of England on the sea dates back to the First Dutch War, when the Amphibians wrote down the results of their experience for the benefit of those who should come after. Their teaching was codified by the Duke of York before the Battle of Lowestoft, and reissued after the further experience which the later Dutch wars provided. The new ideas of the Torrington-Tourville epoch were incorporated by Admiral Rooke, whose *Permanent Fighting Instructions* were still based on what was thought of enduring value in the lessons of the past.

Unfortunately the long era of peace that followed Rooke's war gave the Permanent Instructions an endowment of semi-sanctity. They came to be regarded as unalterable laws.* As a result com-

* If the game of maritime warfare with its intricate battle movements be compared with the game of chess, to what do the Fighting Instructions correspond? The XXIVth Article of the Permanent Instructions reads as follows:

If any commander be wanting in doing his duty, his flag or the next flag officer to him is immediately to send for the said commander from his ship and appoint another in his room.

Place beside this the Chess rule which says:—

Should a player at the commencement of the game, omit to place all his men on the board, he may correct the omission before playing his fourth move, but not afterwards.

Both appear to have the force of unalterable laws; but the resemblance is misleading. Article XXIV should be translated into terms of Chess. *Advice to the player, there is a positive advantage in sacrificing a useless pawn in order to secure a checkmate.*

The Fighting Instructions must not be compared to the Rules of the Game, but to the Gambits or Openings, methods to secure a victory, obviate a disadvantage, or frustrate a dangerous attack. They constitute the wisdom of past players of the game; wisdom that may be acquired with less inconvenience second-hand than in the painful school of experience; difficult to master, no doubt, liable to changes of fashion, but worthy always of respect and the most assiduous study. The oldest and simplest is good enough to catch a tyro; while the master-artist will foil the wisest endeavour of a talented beginner. At Cape Passaro Byng resorted to a primal device of the most artless nature to sweep the board; and at Malaga Rooke easily thwarted the attempt of the Comte de Toulouse to manipulate the subtlest gambit, "Breaking the line from to leeward." A clever player, beaten by an unexpected opening, will be prepared for it in a second match; and the resourceful commander must do his best to obscure his own movements and throw his opponent's into confusion by a carefully planned surprise. Nelson's gambit at the Nile checkmated his foe, but in no wise prepared him for the entirely new opening at Trafalgar. It is not for every one to discover new moves, but

manders handicapped themselves by undue deference to suggestions of a past age which might or might not be useful under changed conditions.*

Admiral Vernon, who was brought up in the school of Rooke, lived to act an important part at the other end of the sterile forty years, and enjoyed up to the day of his death a reputation for sea-skill unsurpassed, must be credited with the first step in the right direction. Divining as if by instinct the requirements of the coming campaign, he supplemented the *Permanent Instructions* with further clauses which enhanced their value. His provident arrangement for bringing the whole fleet or any particular ship into "closer engagement with the enemy than at the distance we first began to engage," would have saved the situation in the Mediterranean during the woful exhibition which signalized the beginning of the Austrian Succession. The ill-luck which dogged the footsteps of Vernon, and denied him the glory of a great fleet action, narrowed the scope of his initiative.

Anson who had as a young man gone through the Passaro campaign and witnessed Sir George Byng's disregard of the *Line*, showed in the Battle of Finisterre that he had as true an insight into the requirements of the age as Vernon had. Born under a luckier star he was able to complete the work which the captor of Porto Bello had initiated. Retaining the *Permanent Instructions* as of the highest value when properly used, he set by their side

it is always possible to revert suddenly to a gambit which has lain neglected for nearly a century, as Rodney did at the Battle of the Saints.

If then the *Fighting Instructions* are accepted as the accumulated wisdom of the past, and not as standards of morality, they cannot be expected to provide positive answers to the ever-changing needs of the present. The underlying principles may be there, but they may require a new interpretation, a new setting. Those who study Gideon's campaigns, and make a resolve to lay in a stock of pitchers, torches and trumpets had better change their profession. Gideon's root principle of surprise stands for all time, but Montrose used white shirts and a rising moon and Dundonald a score of blackened faces. Albemarle's plan, to throw his main strength on a part of the enemy's line is as permanent an asset as "surprise," but the eighteenth century was certain to proffer new situations which called for original methods of treatment.

* Even less enviable than the case of the commander who regarded the *Fighting Instructions* as a fetish, was that of the unfortunate who in the middle of a game resorted to a new movement which he had not explained beforehand, and which his living pieces were unable or unwilling to understand. See case of Admiral Mathews, *vide infra*, pp. 195-9.

hundred and could be code of *Additional Instructions*, which should include Vernon's improvements and his own, and any others that from time to time should establish an equal claim to consideration

From this time forward it came to be understood that while there was excellent reason to regard with respect the contrivances which had been established by precedent and tested by experience, there was no desire on the part of the authorities to thwart initiative, which could always find expression in *Additional Instructions* to supplement the old. Thus the evil effects of the Peace period were abolished; Anson's own victory was seconded by the glorious deeds of Hawke, and these in their turn led to those *Additional Instructions* which embodied the mighty projects of Rodney, Howe and Nelson.

The following list shows the different classes of ships during the Dutch wars. Save for a certain increase of tonnage in the higher rates, they had hardly changed when Anson came to the Admiralty in 1744.—

	Guns	Approximate Tonnage.
First rate . . .	100	Over 1,500
Second rate . . .	90	1,000-1,500
Third rate . . .	80, 70	750-1,000
Fourth rate . . .	60, 50	350-750
Fifth rate . . .	40	200-350
Sixth rate . . .	20	200 and under

There is no true classification here any more than there is in a staircase. The sixth step is higher than the first: the First rate is

six degrees higher than the Sixth rate. It was that only the first four rates could stand in the line; that the first two only were three-deckers and the last two acted as cruisers. But such endeavours to group are upset by the discovery that after the Battle of Toulon [1744] the 50 was discarded from the line while the 60 was retained; and that while the Sixth rate followed the model of the early frigate, the Fifth rate was a two-decker like the Fourth.

It was to Anson's brain that the warships owed an intelligible classification. He re-organized and systematized the Rates and improved the building. His law of order prevailed throughout the classic days of the British Navy.

		Guns	Approximate Tonnage	
Battleships.	First rate	100 and over	2,500	Three-deckers.
	Second rate	90	1,800	
	Third rate *	74, 64	1,500-1,800	Two-deckers.
Cruisers.	Fourth rate	(60), 50	1,000	
	Fifth rate	36, 32	750	Single-deck.
	Sixth rate	28, 24	500 and under	

The appearance of the schedule is not so symmetrical, but it is twice as instructive. There is an essential distinction drawn between the battleship and the cruiser; the first three rates only being accounted worthy to occupy a place in the line. Of these the Third rate forms the staple, while the superior rates act as flagships, or serve to stiffen the line of less expensive ships.† The

* For the construction of a Third rate about 2000 oak-trees were required.

† In 1744 a First-rate would cost about £40,000 and a Third rate (70) £25,000. Compare with these prices the cost of the *Dreadnought* [1906], £1,797,497.

Fifth rate supplies an entirely new type, the normal and perfect development of the frigate, single-decked, built for speed, and in every way superior to the cumbersome old ship of corresponding rate. The Fourth rates (especially the 50's) are retained as flag-ships for a squadron of frigates, and the Sixth class fall into line below the 32's and serve them as the 64's the 74's. When the great war broke out in 1793 there were 239 ships of all rates. Of these there were five First rates and ninety-two Third rates, twelve Fourth rates, seventy-nine Fifth rates, and thirty-five Sixth rates.*

It was while Anson laboured with his multifarious reforms that the building of the present Admiralty was completed by the erection of the Colonnade or Screen, whereon the Two-Power Standard is pleasantly anticipated by bas-reliefs in which the infant Hercules wrestles with a pair of dolphins. Even more striking as a work of art was the first naval uniform which in 1748 was made compulsory for all officers from Admiral to Midshipman. The manner in which it was called into being has aroused some controversy, but the following version has much to be said for it.

Anson, who was not himself a great authority on dress, appealed to his old *Centurion* friends to rig themselves out in costumes that they considered appropriate and submit themselves for inspection. Philip Saumarez, who was all along a favourite in the competition, contrived the successful design.

The task of popularizing the new uniform was then dexterously performed by Diana, Duchess of Bedford, granddaughter of the great John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, and wife of the then First Lord. She ordered a new riding habit in the Saumarez mode and colour, and rode out in the Mall, where she entered into conversation with King George. His Majesty was pleased to admire Her Grace's taste, commended the colours, and probably recalled that the Duke had already spoken to him about a naval uniform.

Thus the Navy went into blue and white, and has stayed there ever since, howbeit with changes of cut.

* At the Battle of the Saints Rodney had thirty-seven ships of the line: thirty-two were Third rates,

The portrait of Lord Anson by Sir Joshua Reynolds shows him in the uniform finally adopted. Here he is seen resting one hand delicately upon the fluke of an anchor. This property and a ship (possibly the *Centurion*) in the distance lend a nautical air which is falsified by the spreading tree under which the Admiral takes his stand. To avoid the disarrangement of his nicely powdered wig he carries under his arm his three-cornered chapeau* bras garnished with gold lace round the brim. The waistcoat, one of the all-sufficient vestments of the hour, descending to the knee, is made of white cashmere set off by vast pockets trimmed with blue. The sleeves, purposely made long, terminate at the wrist in a "filmy froth" of mousquetaire lace. Of mousquetaire also is the cravat, which methodical Anson has tucked into his waistcoat to be out of the way. The outer coat is of thick blue cloth, with sleeves cut short to show the waistcoat sleeves below, and skirts outrageously flaunting. The cuffs are of generous dimensions of white material to match the vest, and trimmed, as also the frontage of the coat, with wondrous and manifold lapels. If the portrait were but full-length, there would doubtless be seen the white stockings pulled up into a roll above the knee, and shoes with neat red heels.

There was no more program in the navy after 1748, and (it may be added) no more fancy rigs of Captain Whiffle's designing.

Anson's mastery of detail amazed his contemporaries. On his voyage round the world he noted in his book the names of all his prisoners and the dispositions he made for their comfort. With unwearied patience he accounted for every spar and every rope. And while he made himself acquainted with the tiniest minutiae, the greatness of the catastrophes which warred against him, kept his outlook broad and his energies all-embracing. No other training could have equipped him so excellently for the administrative work which followed. Famous alike as navigator, explorer, admiral and statesman, Anson was the despair of the spectator and the tatler. He hated dances and routs; he shunned society; could not be lured into conversation; never made speeches, save in the Council Chamber; never wrote letters, except on business: in short "had been round the world, but never in it." Living without repine laborious days, he preferred in the evening of his life to listen to music which he passionately

loans rather than exchange experiences with Honor. Ever piling up against his country a debt which she could never properly repay, he might well rest content to let his deeds speak for him to posterity, and smile the old benevolent smile when he heard himself dismissed with a sneer as "the silent son-in-law of the Chancellor."

HAWKE

BORN 1705—DIED 1781

England was England, and a gallant brood she bore
When Hawke came swooping from the west.

HENRY NEWBOLT

IN the War of the Spanish Succession England had engaged on behalf of the Austrian candidate. The Archduke Charles was then the younger son of the Emperor: before the war was over he had himself assumed the purple as the Emperor Charles VI. His family had enjoyed good fortune above the common measure. Starting with a ducal nucleus they had through the centuries collected one possession after another until their credit and affluence marked them out as the only possible Germanic state capable of presiding over the heterogeneous agglomeration which was "no longer Holy, or Roman, or an Empire."

In addition to Austria, Bohemia, Silesia and other German states the personal possessions of Charles VI included the vast Kingdom of Hungary, the famous Duchy of Milan, and that apple of discord, the Netherlands.* Unfortunately the Emperor had no son to succeed him. At his death the Imperial sceptre must pass into the hands of one who was not a Hapsburg. This was irremediable, and Charles was resigned to it; but he was resolute that all his own possessions should retain their individuality and their indivisibility, and with this end in view he designed that they should descend entire to his daughter Maria Theresa. According to Salic Law the Elector of Bavaria had a better claim, but the powers of Europe (upon receipt of reasonable concessions) voiced their adherence to the Pragmatic Sanction, a document

* For terms of Utrecht, see pp. 113-4; for Austrian genealogy, see p. 50.

which disposed of the Austrian heritage according to the Emperor's desires.

Charles's careful arrangements consumed a score of years, and when their author died in 1740 they were hardly complete. It had been impossible to persuade the Elector of Bavaria to waive his claims: but the danger that threatened Maria Theresa was not a danger that had been foreseen. It is the unexpected that happens.

The year 1740 brought a new monarch also to the throne of Prussia, Frederick II, the redoubtable Frederick the Great. Assiduous cultivation of the arts of peace when heir to the Crown left Europe unprepared for the act which signalized this prince's accession. His unhappy boyhood and youth, passed in conflict with an eccentric and villainous-tempered father, had taught him to practise insincerity, to wear duplicity as a mask, and above all to rely on himself. When his father died he inherited a magnificent army, and when the Emperor died he determined to use it. Under cover of courtly, almost affectionate messages to the young Queen of Hungary, he poured an army of 30,000 men into her rich province of Silesia; and about the time that Vernon brought his armada to Carthagen, and Anson dragged his stricken mariners to Juan Fernandez, he rolled out before him an Austrian army who dared to dispute his possession.

THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

1740-1748

Frederick's unprincipled action set Europe in a blaze. If Prussia wanted Silesia; was not Spain itching to recover Milan? was not France craving for the Netherlands? . . . or (in the language of diplomacy) if Frederick were to assert his claims, could France and Spain stand by and see Bavaria defrauded? Poor Maria Theresa! The vultures gathered round on every side. Her youth, her beauty, her fearlessness, her energy, her skill won applause from the most unruly of her subjects; but where were the guarantors of the Sanction? One, and only one, stood at her side, George, Elector of Hanover, true German and—King of England. His subjects applauded him; but England need not plume herself too complacently upon her chivalry in the young

Queen's cause. England was already at war with Spain,* and Spain had declared for Bavaria.

The Family Compact† had not brought France into direct antagonism with England in the squabble over Jenkins' Ear; but the bond that tied her to Spain threatened a rupture of good relations. When France took the side of Bavaria in the Austrian entanglement, the ancient enemies began to scowl at one another. The Elector of Hanover did his best to unite the states of Germany against the foreigner, and found his electorate conveniently placed upon the flank of the French advance towards Vienna. This did not clear the way for a better understanding, and in 1743 the French army caught the tiresome Elector in a trap at Dettingen. George planted himself on his royal feet, mistrusting horses, and mowed down his enemies with his own royal hands. The French may be forgiven if they recognized in the victor of Dettingen no less a person than the King of England. Fencing masks were thrown away, and in 1744 the champions of Bavaria and Austria were definitely at war on their own account.

When England had equipped the expeditions of Vernon and Anson, she had not forgotten the Mediterranean. She could not afford to do so, for Spain* had not yet forgiven the seizure of Minorca and the Rock. Admiral Haddock was appointed to the command. In 1742, as the European outlook grew blacker, reinforcements were sent to him under Vice-Admiral Lestock. In the same year Haddock was invalided home, and relegated the command to Lestock until the arrival of his own successor, Admiral Thomas Mathews.

Lestock was a well-trying warrior. Born in 1679, he had served in the *Barfleur*, Shovel's flagship at Malaga, and had been Flag Captain to Byng (again in the *Barfleur*) at the Battle of Passaro. He had served with credit under Vernon in the West Indies, where he led the attack upon the Boca Chica forts. There was no one to question his courage; but in spite of this, and in spite of his wide experience, he was universally unpopular. He had held an appointment in the Medway while Mathews was Commissioner at Chatham, and a divergence of views upon a question of politics

* See p. 134.

† See pp. 139 and 154 n.

had engendered an irreconcilable antagonism between them. There were faults of temper on both sides; but Lestock appears to have been narrow-minded, jealous and maliciously spiteful. There was not a soul in the Navy who cared for him, and on being approached by the Admiralty, Mathews made his own appointment to the Mediterranean contingent on Lestock's recall. The Admiralty did not take the condition seriously. The event proved that they would have been wiser if they had done so; for bitter was the annoyance of Lestock on hearing that the post which he hoped to fill himself had devolved upon his own arch-enemy.

The situation that Mathews had to face was no easy one, and made the estrangement with his second in command all the more deplorable. He had not only to guard against the possible junction of the Brest and Toulon fleets, but he had to prevent the allies from sending soldiers to operate against poor harassed Maria Theresa in Milan; and in his character as envoy to the Court of Sardinia it behoved him to hinder the King from abandoning the English cause when inducements to do so were daily proffered by the Bourbon monarchs of France, Spain and Naples. Mathews was a good officer. Three years older than Lestock he had as a youngster taken part in Beachy Head and Barfleur. Later he had as Captain of the *Kent* materially assisted in the capture of the Admiral at Passaro. He would have made an ideal country squire, for apart from his love of sport and his understanding of crops, he was an enlightened magistrate and a warm-hearted, open-handed host. He had, however, a most exalted sense of his own dignity and importance. As Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean he assumed the port of Jove; interpreted the least affront as mutiny red-handed; saw offence where none was intended; and construed peccadilloes as atrocities. The Italians christened him disrespectfully "Il Furibundo," and his demeanour went far to justify the title. When a French ship off Villafranca refused to do homage to the British flag, Mathews sank her with a broadside though war was not yet declared. Determining to detach the King of Naples from the Franco-Spanish alliance, he sent his ships into the Bay with breathless terms. The King suggested negotiations, whereupon, Mathews' messenger pulled out his watch and allowed twenty-four hours' grace before bombardment. The King was detached and the Nea-

politans dreamed uneasily of Blake. When Mathews arrived on his station in the summer of 1743, the failure of Lestock to send a frigate of welcome brought from offended majesty a public reprimand.

The conjunction of Mathews and Lestock promised to produce unusual developments!

It was not till the beginning of 1744 that the Mediterranean squadron was complete. Among the latest arrivals was the *Berwick*, whose captain was destined to win for himself in the coming fight unfading laurels. Edward Hawke was in 1744 already thirty-nine years of age, and though an accomplished seaman had up till now seen little fighting. Born in the West Country, he had lost his father at an early age, and had been brought up by his mother's brother, Martin Bladen, whose genial nature awoke an intense affection in his nephew's heart. Bladen was a Yorkshireman, who had learned the military art in the school of Marlborough; won a seat in Parliament as representative of Portsmouth; held various offices under the Crown; and made a translation of *Cæsar's Commentaries*. He did his utmost to further the interests of his adopted son; but his influence was not of course very far-reaching. However, he introduced his nephew to his Yorkshire friends; and among them, in due time, the young officer found the mistress of his heart, who brought him a rich dowry of beauty, and broad acres of landed property as well.

Hawke joined the Navy as a volunteer at the age of fifteen, just as his country was entering the long period of peace. For the first twenty years of his professional career it was difficult enough to secure advancement: to achieve glory and distinction was impossible. His work lay for the most part in West Indian waters, whose violence taught him that "cautious intrepidity" which was at a later day to prove so valuable. He served under Hosier, of unhappy memory,* under Chaloner Ogle, and under

* In his efforts to secure the adherence of Spain to his Pragmatic Sanction, Charles VI in 1725 agreed to demand from Great Britain the restitution of Minorca and the Rock, and to threaten her with a Stuart Restoration if she ventured to object. Walpole replied with a Quadruple Alliance, and sent Admiral Hosier to the West Indies to threaten the Spanish Colonies. Hosier was stringently forbidden even to dabble in hostility; and the tedious monotony of blockading Porto Bello was rendered terrible by an appalling epidemic.

Warren, the captor of Louisburg. It was from Ogle that Hawke, at the age of thirty, received Post rank. Four years later, in the great year '39, he commissioned the *Portland*. This crazy vessel detained her captain at Barbados when he would fain have been at Porto Bello, but none the less she helped to perfect his seamanship. The callous neglect of the naval arm by Walpole had reduced the dockyards to a state of demoralization which the patient endeavours of Anson alone could cleanse. So deplorable was the state of the *Portland* that her sick-list was always overcrowded, and her own ailments demanded incessant attention. There was no part of her anatomy but required complete renewal; and when she was caught in a gale towards the close of her commission, all three masts incontinently went by the board. Their stumps, when removed, fell to powder, and the mainmast offered as much resistance to the prod of a walking stick as a full grown pumpkin to a rapier.

In making ready the *Berwick*, Hawke was faced by similar difficulties, and in the general decadence of the service found it

The men died in thousands, but still Hosier kept his watch. Walpole was not oblivious to his claims, but the messenger who brought out the news of his knighthood found that poor Hosier had died of a broken heart. His memory is kept green by the celebrated poem called "Admiral Hosier's Ghost." The scene is laid at Porto Bello, where Admiral Vernon is back on board the *Burford* after his gallant capture of the place. To him rises amid hideous yells and shrieks a troop of horrid ghosts from oozy tombs in dreary hammocks shrouded. Hosier acts as spokesman.

See these mournful spectres sweeping
Ghastly o'er this hated wave,
Whose wan cheeks are stained with weeping,
They were English Captains brave!
Mark those numbers pale and hoftid,
Those were once my sailors bold!
Lo, each hangs his drooping forehead,
While his dismal tale is told.

I by twenty sail attended,
Did this Spanish town affright;
Nothing then its wealth defended
But my orders not to fight.
For resistance I could fear none,
But with twenty ships had come
What thou, brave and happy Vernon,
Hast achieved with six alone.

harder than ever to press a company. His, however, was a spirit that almost welcomed difficulties as something to overcome, and when at last the *Berwick* joined Admiral Mathews, her commander was second to none in the temper that nerves for the fight.

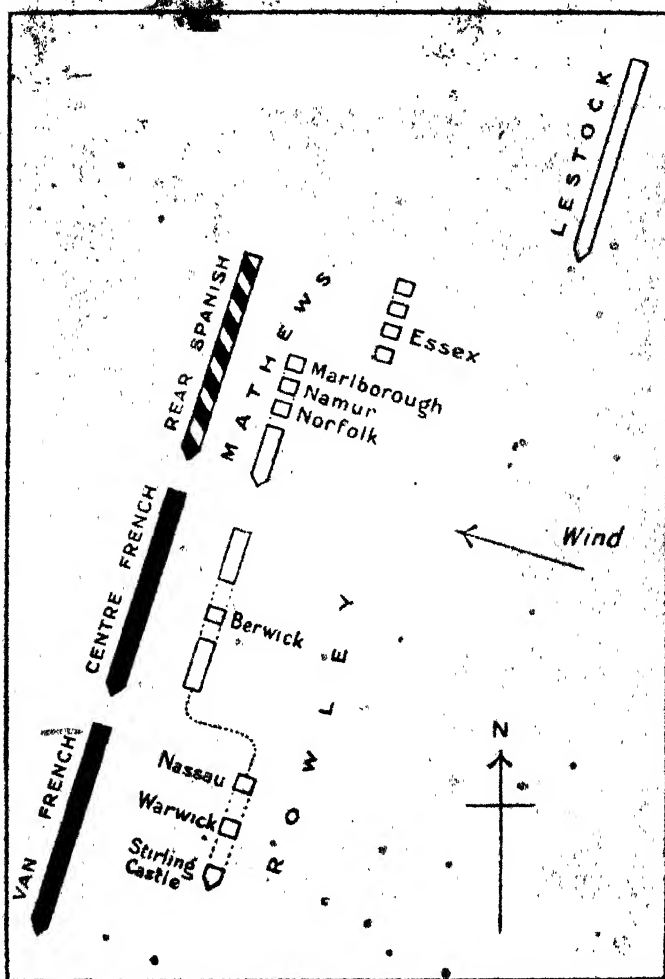
THE BATTLE OF TOULON.

FEBRUARY 11, 1744

When Captain Hawke reached the Mediterranean, Admiral Mathews was mounting guard off Toulon. A detachment of Spanish ships, foiled in an endeavour to reach the Milanese, were here reclining under the ægis of France. French and Spanish ships together numbered twenty-eight; but Admiral Mathews had an equal number at his disposal, and the commander of the allies saw little object in running the gauntlet. As he waited, however, news came to him that the Brest fleet had eluded the vigilance of the British and was making for the Straits if he would meet it there. Monsieur de Court was no dashing commander. He had already passed the allotted span of life. He had little hope of slipping away unnoticed; but he thought he might well outpace his opponents, who, long from port, were beginning to be foul and slow.

Thus it came about that the Franco-Spanish ships put to sea, and being sighted formed line of battle without feeling any desire or call to fight if a contest could be possibly avoided.

The emendation of the rules governing the conduct of a British fleet in action were not of course by this time introduced. In fact Anson had not yet returned from his voyage round the world. There is evidence to prove that Mathews went very carefully through the Fighting Instructions, but beyond a few verbal alterations, he saw no reason for change. He elected to fight by the obsolete code of 1703. This in the end proved insufficient for his needs; but he had not the genius that could devise a scheme for the overthrow of a fleet equal in strength and eager to escape. Such a plan was not of course indispensable if he had established between himself and his subordinates a cordial bond of brotherhood and mutual esteem. But he was still unacquainted with the majority of his captains, and hurried down the coast of



THE BATTLE OF TOULON

February 11, 1744

[In the long interval of peace, which elapsed between this battle and Malaga, the terms Red, White and Blue-as applied to squadrons had been forgotten]

battle knowing that he had won the rancorous hatred of his second in command.

On 11th February, the day of battle, Monsieur de Court's line was in excellent formation, his own ships making up the van and centre and the Spanish vessels bringing up the rear. Mathews had had the trouble of finding his adversary; and though he enjoyed the advantage of the wind, he had not completed his fighting dispositions. Admiral Rowley in the *Barfleur* led the van, he himself in the *Namur* occupied the centre of the line; but the rear squadron under Lestock was some miles to eastward of the main formation. The Fighting Instructions left no doubt as to the method of handling a fleet which had the advantage of the wind. The Line Ahead formation was to be observed until the ordered array was equal in length to that of the enemy, and parallel; the van steering with the enemy's van, the centre with the enemy's centre, and the rear with his rear. Not till then would the windward ships run down upon their foes.*

The delay or inability of Lestock to take his proper place offered Monsieur de Court an honourable retreat. He continued his progress in line ahead, and looked like getting away. Mathews realized his country's need of a victory on the sea at the beginning of a European war, and the more De Court shuffled, and Lestock tarried, the more annoyed he became. Evidently if he waited until his own rear came up with that of the enemy the chances of a battle would be lost. Under circumstances so trying he determined to bear down without further delay, and hurl his own van upon the enemy's centre, and his own centre upon the enemy's rear. The idea was the inspiration of the moment, but it was not by any means lacking in sound qualities. It had the undeniable advantage of surprise. The enemy were evidently nervous, and a sudden abandonment of ordinary methods would throw them into confusion in the midst of which he could carry off the victory.

The neglect of the enemy's van gave the French a chance of doubling *à la Tourville*. Yet Mathews may well have thought that the consternation caused by his novel method would paralyse the enemy's offensive; and that Lestock in the wind would act as a reserve and bear down in support of that part of the battle

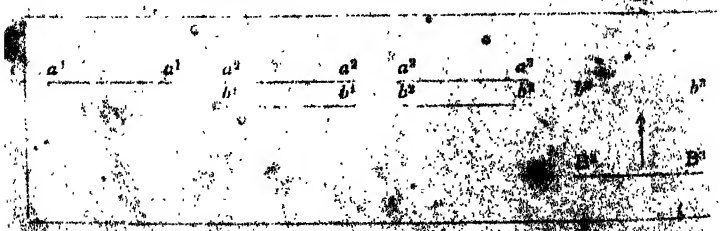
* Cp. note, p. 72.

which needed assistance, long before the hostile van could make its power felt. Without hauling down the signal for the Line, lest he should mystify those who had adopted the formation, he bore down to the attack with his centre and van.

A man of Lestock's sterling ability and thrice-tried valour must have seen at a glance the share in the coming struggle which Mathews had apportioned to him. But his passionate hatred for his superior burnt out the good within him, and tempted him to play the villain's part. The Admiral had dugged a pit; with a little encouragement he would fall into the midst of it himself. He had hoisted the signal for the Line Ahead. He should be obeyed to the letter. * Who was the Vice-Admiral that he should venture to criticize? The Vice-Admiral would do his best to take up the position which the line assigned to him.* If he were successful, he would (it was true) have no one to fight: but whose fault was that? If he were unsuccessful, the blame would rest on the Admiral who had been fool-hardy enough to begin the battle before he was ready to do so. It is a little unfortunate for Lestock's reputation that he had recently received an intimation from the Admiralty that in the event of anything happening to Mathews the command would devolve on himself. It is not a little suspicious that owing to light airs and a most tiresome inshore current he was unfortunately prevented from arriving in the useless position, which it was never intended that he should fill, until the battle was well-nigh over.

Meanwhile in the English centre Mathews in the *Nemur*, nobly backed up by the *Norfolk* and the *Marlborough*, delivered a spirited attack upon the Spaniards. He fought his own ship as he had done off Cape Passaro. Placing himself within pistol-shot of the great

* Viz., B^2 ————— B^1 to b^2 ————— b^1 .



Spanish flag up he pounded away at her, and as the action proceeded handled his glass as nonchalantly as a beau at a play, not a whit disconcerted when a cannon-ball carried away the rail against which he was leaning. Unhappily, however, the four ships that brought up the rear of his division proved as shy and timid as fawns. This was in some measure due to the demoralizing effect of the Whipple era which had closed the school of experience for an interminable vacation; but at least it is fair to suppose that Lestock's failure to bring or even promise them support converted the merely nervous into vulgar cravens. As a result their chicken-hearted conduct robbed the gallant *Marlborough* of her support, and she was sorely smitten by the foe and lost her captain, Cornwall, a brave heart who might else have done great things. Mathews also felt the lack of support, and began to fear that the Spanish flagship would escape him. Determined to capture her, he resorted to a fire ship, and detailed the captain of the *Essex* to escort her to her place. But the *Essex* failed in her duty for the second time. The fire ship was sunk, and the *Real Felipe* saved. In the van of the Spanish division the *Poder* (Power), lusty and strong, engaged in combat with more than one English ship, and held her own with a saucy confidence that maddened her opponents, who (there is good reason to believe) were not engaging her as hotly as the Admiral's example demanded.

In Admiral Rowley's division the main interest lay in the probable attempt on the part of the enemy's van to double. The French were quite prepared to carry out this manoeuvre, but their attempt was frustrated by the *Stirling Castle*, *Warwick* and *Nassau*, who in the most approved style beat to windward with extended intervals as Tourville's van had done at Cape Barfleur. This movement may at least in part have been due to a care for their own safety, but it was undoubtedly the right counter to the French attack; however Admiral Rowley with a division of nine all told was considerably weakened for the offensive. His own ship, fifth in the line and the ship next astern, fought like Trojans, but their prowess pales into insignificance beside the record of number seven. Number seven was the *Berwick*, 70, which to those who grope their way through the dismal shadows of this ghastly day suddenly looms out like the sun shining in his strength.

Captain Hawke first laid himself alongside of the *Neptune*. In less than an hour he had driven her from the line with her captain killed and 200 of her company. Here was a start. Next he singled out the *Poder*, vainglorious still and boastful, putting Englishmen to shame. He sought her out, left his station to do so, and cared not. He laid the devoted *Berwick* alongside, and with his first broadside slew twenty-seven men, and dismounted several lower-deck guns. In twenty minutes he had shorn away her standing rigging, and mown down her masts. The *Poder* contained brave men as she had already proved, and gamely they fought, but the English captain was not to be denied. After two hours' fruitless resistance the end came, and with casualties too horrible to describe and too numerous to reckon the gallant *Poder* struck. Not once nor twice in the combat her late antagonists invited her to submit, but she waved them aside; to the captain of the *Berwick*, and to him alone, would she strike, for here was a prince of men, not moulded from ordinary clay.

This is how Captain Edward Hawke captured the only prize on that fateful 11th February, and his casualties numbered five!

The battle had reached this point when De Court realizing that the Spaniards in his rear were being hardly pressed, put his ships about and returned on the opposite tack to their relief. When complete his movement would of course bring into action the untired vessels of the allied van. Admiral Mathews had seen his hopes vanish while the battle was equally engaged; he had nothing to hope from its continuance. Deeply mortified by Lestock's treachery, incensed by the conduct of individual captains, he beat to windward declining further action: and the battle ended. This defensive movement unfortunately prevented Hawke from securing his prize. The approach of the enemy's van and the retreat of his friends forced him to abandon her, together with the prize crew whom he had sent on board.

On the following day the enemy, who saw the entire British fleet outwardly at unity with itself, determined to make good the distance they had gained in the night, and showed a clean pair of heels. The *Poder* was too gravely wounded to run, and Mathews quickly snapped her up. It is worthy of mention as a witness to his want of tact, that instead of delivering her over to Hawke with a message of approval, he ordered her to be burnt by the

captain of the *Essex* who had shown the whitest feather of them all.

It is not necessary to congratulate the allies upon their victory; but it cannot be doubted that the honours of the day were theirs. They had decided to make for the Straits in defiance of the British, and had carried out their intention. No startling victory had been gained, no soul-stirring heroism displayed, but it was the business of Britain to win sea-battles, and the allies had proved to her that she could not always do so.

The story of the sea-fight off Toulon does not end with the departure of the French. On his arrival at Port Mahon, Admiral Mathews instantly arrested his second in command for his gross failure to succour his country in her need, and this dramatic touch served as a prelude to a congested series of court-martials, without precedent in the history of the Navy. Among others the four captains astern of Mathews were tried for their failure to support him. All the trials ended sadly as they were bound to do; but the case of the *Essex* was perhaps the saddest. Her captain was a son of Sir John Norris, Commander-in-Chief in the Channel and a splendid officer. Utterly unworthy of his blood, the craven deserted in disguise on the way home, and was never heard of again. The unfortunate efforts of Admiral Rowley to shield the son of his oldest friend terminated his own career, and swelled the volume of tragedy which this sordid story discloses. The three captains ahead of Rowley, who had hugged the wind, were likewise tried, but pleaded with show of reason that their movement was intended to neutralize the attack of the French. They were reinstated with honour unsullied.

At the instigation of Lestock's friends in Parliament, Mathews himself was tried. No one could dispute the late-miscarriage, and he was responsible. What had he to say? Had his deeds been able to speak, they would have told of his zeal in his country's cause, and of his bravery in the hour of battle. But his deeds were speechless, and he was obliged to acknowledge that he had flown in the face of those very Instructions which he had accepted as a working basis. His rashness had perhaps thrown his own forces into wilder confusion than those of the enemy. Unhappy Mathews! he was adjudged henceforward unfit for high command, and rejected as unworthy of the service which has always regarded

lently a well-judged rashness, and valued highly the qualities which Mathews had displayed.

But what of Iago? what of the villain of the piece? If Mathews was dismissed the service, was Lestock torn asunder by wild horses? Few can doubt what motives had actuated him when he sacrificed his country's cause upon the altar of his self-love and his pride; but it is not to be expected that poetic justice can be meted out by an ordinary tribunal, and Iago's plot had been cleverly contrived. He proved that when Mathews had hoisted a signal for the Line, he had done his utmost to take up his position; but that, if conditions had been better calculated to expedite his arrival, Mathews' extraordinary dispositions left his division without a single ship to fight. It was a little unkind of his superior to debar him from a share in the fight for which he panted; but to preclude him from the fight, and then complain of his inaction was absurdly unreasonable.

This argument proved conclusive, and Lestock was acquitted. The verdicts set side by side are calculated to heat the blood of patriots to the boiling-point; and in spite of their technical correctness they must remain for ever a blot upon England's honour and her highly prized sense of justice.

A great naval victory in 1744 might have gone far to deliver the country from the two years' nightmare that followed. The main attack of the French upon Vienna had been foiled at Dettingen as at Blenheim. They turned their attention to the Netherlands. No Ramillies checkmated them here, but a Fontenoy cheered them on, and the Jacobite cause at last had found a man. Though robbed of his escort by Peirce Brett,* Bonnie Prince Charlie kept

* The determination of Charles Edward to wrest the Crown from George II was cordially welcomed by the French, who were keenly anxious to debar England from further interference on the continent. There was no intention to revert to the policy of Louis XIV and identify the scheme with France. The failure of James II and the hearty goodwill with which the English fought him as long as he brought French soldiers with him had taught a useful lesson. The Prince did not leave France at the head of 100 ships but contented himself with two. The *Elisabeth* (64) was well manned, and served as floating bank and arsenal: the enterprise in great measure turned upon the invaluable cargo she carried. The Pretender concealed his royal and cunning person in a little brig called the *Doutelle*. He hoped by creeping round the west coast of Ireland to avoid the cruisers in the Channel; but

high holiday at Holyrood in 1745; and hurling the thunderbolt upon his foes at Prestonpans, marched nearer and ever nearer to London, while that august city was thrown into a panic such as she had not known since the days when De Ruyter was led to Chatham by unpaid British sailors. The Duke of Cumberland, whose rashness had lost Fontenoy, was recalled from the Netherlands, and if Marshal Saxe did not follow and join hands with the Pretender, he at least showed a nice appreciation of Admiral Vernon, who was keeping guard in the narrow seas with the usual half-dozen ships. The crisis of 1745-46 paralysed the English power of initiative, and it was not till the savage cruelty of Culloden Moor had driven "the lad that was born to be king over the sea to Skye," that England ventured to raise her eyes from home affairs and vindicate her right to rule the waves.

However evil the effects of Toulon, at least the action introduced to his country one who might otherwise have waited long for the recognition he deserved. Not even Nelson at St. Vincent acquired a more excellent name than Hawke of the *Despatch* in the fight off Toulon. King George upon his throne spoke of him with pride, learned to call him "My Captain," and three years after the battle found an opportunity of serving him.

Theoretically there were still only nine possible holders of flag rank.* Necessity had increased these inadequate numbers, but

long before the expedition reached Cape Clear it was sighted by the fleet of Payta.

It was five o'clock of a July day when the fight began. The little *Doutelle* ran under the *Lion's* stern to worry her hindquarters, but receiving a warm welcome withdrew in haste and assumed the pose of a nervous and interested spectator. The *Elisabeth* made an excellent fight, and as the daylight faded the two ships lay gasping on the waves. The Jacobite was gravely wounded; her hull was riddled; and hers was a case for the nearest port if she could stagger so far. Her opponent still growled savagely. In claws the *Lion* was a lion still, but no longer a creature of wings! The little *Doutelle* took to the situation. It was time for her to go.

Early in August the Pretender arrived in Inverness-shire with no outfit but a brave heart and a winning way. His armoury and bank, keeping affairs with the utmost difficulty, rolled back at length in dire misery to Brest.

- * 1. The Admiral of the Fleet.
2. Admiral of the White.
3. Admiral of the Blue.
4. Vice-Admiral of the Red.

not beyond twenty-one. Whenever an admiral was created, the utmost care was shown in selection, and as a rule a long list of deserving captains was passed over in the process. To remedy this injustice a new scheme [attributable of course to Anson] had recently called into being an imaginary "Yellow" squadron. Yellow flags were henceforth to be presented to the captains passed over, who thus reached a titular eminence which in part consoled them for retirement.*

It will be remembered [see pp. 175-9] that the tide of misery setting in from Toulon was first stemmed by Anson in his brilliant fight off Finisterre. In the opinion of the best judge of naval merit who ever lived, Edward Boscawen had by his services upon that day established an incontestable claim to a flag. His inclusion in the narrow limits of the list would, however, close for ever the career of Hawke, who was his senior by several years. The Admiralty reconciled itself to the inevitable; but the King interposed a veto. Invited to give Boscawen a blue flag and Hawke a yellow, he exclaimed with some heat, "No, no; I'll not have Hawke yellowed!"

Thus the two stout Cornishmen passed into the list together; and, like twin runners in the race for glory, commenced a life-long rivalry.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF FINISTERRE

OCTOBER 14, 1747

Then six of their squadron, that scarcely could creep,
We lugg'd and tugg'd home, in our harbours to sleep.
And so large were their hulks, tho' we ply'd 'em with rubbing,
To be sure their thick hides "*took a great deal of drubbing.*"

CONTEMPORARY BALLAD

Hawke suffered from the cruel pangs of disappointment when, in the spring of 1747, he found himself watching the Channel

5. Vice-Admiral of the White.
6. Vice-Admiral of the Blue.
7. Rear-Admiral of the Red.
8. Rear-Admiral of the White.
9. Rear-Admiral of the Blue.

* During his tenure of office Anson also made the possibilities of promotion more generously elastic.

Fleet drop behind the horizon en route for Finisterre. As captor of the *Poder*, he was known to Anson only by repute, and Anson had a legion of Centurions from whom to choose his captains.

When all was over but the shouting and the ennobled victor had returned to the Admiralty, the Channel Fleet was put under the command of Sir Peter Warren. Hawke was glad to be under so old a friend; and when he received the news of his flag, he felt in some way compensated for the battle he had missed. There was better to come. Sir Peter fell sick, and requested that Rear-Admiral Hawke might be associated in his command. The indisposition increased, and the entire control of the fleet devolved upon the second in command at the very moment that Lord Anson formulated a fresh design for the discomfiture of the enemy. News had come that a vast convoy in preparation at La Rochelle was shortly to be escorted to the West Indies by a fleet of fighting ships. The Channel Squadron must bestride their route, and attempt to accomplish a second time the brilliant success of the spring.

Hawke hoisted his flag in the *Devonshire*, and with fourteen sail of the line set forth upon his quest.

On 14th October, while many a league still separated the fleet from Finisterre, the French Armada was sighted. The wind was blowing from the east, and Hawke was to leeward. He at once signalled for a general chase; but presently as the vast numbers of the enemy declared themselves, he made signal for the line of battle ahead. The French commander, Monsieur L'Etenduère eyed his opponent's tactics narrowly. He had with him only nine ships that he could put into the line, and he had a fleet of 250 merchantmen for whose safety he was responsible. With instant decision he bade his non-combatants fly under press of canvas, and himself prepared to hold his wind, throw himself upon the enemy, and engage him in a battle to the death. When two such combatants enter the lists, no herald need call for silence.

At first sight the contest might be thought hardly fair. L'Etenduère had sent one of his ships with the convoy, and now had but eight to the Englishman's fourteen. The numbers tell their own story, but the story is a little misleading. Since the disappearance of the Stuart dynasty the royal interest had been withdrawn from

the British dockyards with most regrettable results. "The unthinking populace," wrote a brother Admiral to Anson about this time, "imagine it strange an English ship of 70 guns cannot take a French ship of the same force, whereas it is pretty apparent that our 70-gun ships are little superior to their ships of 50 guns." The superiority of his ships may well account, at least in part, for the way L'Etenduère defied the lightning.*

When Hawke saw the French warships shake themselves free from the embraces of the helpless, and stand like men to meet him, he discovered of course the inferiority of their numbers, and hauled down the signal for the line. For all he knew the French might have feigned their defiance for defensive reasons only, intent on avoiding a battle. There was no time to be lost. Once more he ordered a general chase. The French had, however, no desire to avoid the challenge, and stood under easy sail for the English to come up. This the English did with what speed they might, and adopted a method of ranging that proved as efficacious as it was novel. Each ship as she came up with the foe passed under the lee of the ship or ships already engaged and made for the next enemy ahead.†

The first ship to engage the enemy was the *Princess Louisa*. Her captain was Charles Watson, a fine fellow, keen and capable, and a grand fighter. Dispatched on lucrative business by Admiral Mathews just before the Battle of Toulon, he had scented powder in the air and returned in case he was wanted. In the battle itself he had done well and earned the approval of his chief. In the First Battle of Finisterre he had won the praise of Anson, and by his handling of the *Princess Louisa* on this occasion he established a claim to high command. Philip Saunders, designer of uniforms, was close behind and carried the *Nottingham* within pistol-shot of the foe to make quite sure of hitting him. As for the commander of the *Yarmouth*, it would have warmed Anson's heart to see the way that Saunders comported himself: clinging with bull-dog tenacity to the *Neptune*.

* The much-needed improvement in British naval construction was brought about by Anson himself, who based his reform upon the models which in 1747 were brought home from Finisterre.

† The merit of this stratagem was in due time recognized by its inclusion among the *Additional Instructions*. Nelson proved its solid worth at the Battle of Copenhagen.

gripping her, shaking her as if he grudged her the name she bore, till at last the flag came down. And beside the Centurion brothers was the captain of the *Eagle*, little known as yet, but destined for great things. George Brydges Rodney here makes his debut, fraternizing with the Ansonites; plunging at once into the thick of things, and recking little how many guns his opponent had so long as she stayed to fire them.

With such a band of brothers, Hawke was at liberty to survey the field composedly. Did he do so? Could the calculating adroitness which served him so well at Toulon desert him now? His eye seemed to range over the whole field. Nothing escaped him. He signalled to Captain Fox to engage the *Tonnant* because he seemed in the best position to do so with effect. He refused to send his frigates after the convoy because he saw that the convoy was so well protected with frigates that such an errand would entail unjustifiable risk. In the flash of an eye he seems in the moments of tensest excitement to have arrived at decisions which hours of cool reflection could only confirm. He knew the convoy would escape, he knew where it was going, he knew it would reassemble at Martinique, and that it would arrive there unaccompanied by guardships. He therefore detached the *Weasel* sloop, and instructed her captain sleeplessly to plough his way across the Atlantic, bespeak no one on the road, rest not until he found the Commander-in-Chief of the West Indies, and make him acquainted with the happy news.

From the coolness of Hawke's dispositions it might be guessed that he denied himself a personal part in the stir and tumult of the fray. He did not. He denied himself nothing. He fought throughout as he, and only he, could fight. The first ship of the enemy to surrender surrendered to him. True she was but a 50-gun ship, and for that reason he somewhat contemptuously left her, and sought out Monsieur L'Etenduère in the *Tonnant*. While he did so, the *Eagle*, who had had her wings clipped, fell aboard him, and before he could disentangle himself the *Demon* stars lost ground to leeward. Chagrined at the mishap he endeavoured to fight at long range, but the elevation caused a strain which snapped all the breechings of his lower-deck guns as if they had been cotton and sent the ordnance flying fore and aft like mad things. The moment was a perilous one as Hawke's other

sary was free to reply. But Captain Harland in the *Tilbury* slipped between the combatants and drew the fire upon himself.

Hawke's *Devonshire* was a 66-gun ship. He tied up her breechings and plunged once more into the fight. Time had been lost, and with it the opportunity of fighting the *Tonnant*. But if he could not fight an 80, there were several 74's. Here meanwhile was the *Trident*, a 64. At her, boys! There was a compulsion in Hawke's attack that seemed to paralyse his victims. The *Trident* fought bravely; proved worthy of her name. No shame to yield to Hawke. Was this enough? Not while there was daylight. At last a 74, the *Terrible*! Hawke closed again. The *Terrible* also carried heroes, and she fought till all her masts went by the board. But as surely as the others she surrendered. At the end of the day, of the eight French ships in the battle-line, six had surrendered; and three of the six to Hawke. As he paused for breath between his captures, he remarked that every one was not enjoying himself as well as he ought to be: and so to the fighters weary but glory-earning came the signal which the Navy owed to Old Grog, "the whole line will now engage the enemy at closer quarters than that at which the enemy were first engaged." There were some splendid fellows in that fleet, but there was only one Hawke. *Severn*, *Trident*, *Terrible*, three ships in one brief afternoon! Could Orlando or Godfrey de Bouillon have done more?

It is hardly surprising that Hawke was dissatisfied with what the others had done, when he had done by himself as much as every one else put together. But in truth all, with a single exception, did well; and it is amusing to find Warren whispering to Anson behind Hawke's back that he had made it all right with the officers who had been disappointed with Hawke's report. Even Captain Fox—the exception—had signalized himself by the capture of the *Fouqueux*, the Spitfire.* This, however, was counter-balanced by his failure to take or detain the enemy's flagship.

After fighting till nightfall, the *Tonnant*, leaning heavily upon the shoulder of the *Intrepide*, made the most of her position in the van and set sail for the open sea. Saunders, Saumarez and Rodney made chase; but the two big fugitives were still dangerous, and the confusion of nightfall was sadly augmented when the gallant Saumarez was slain by a random shot. The loss was very

grievous, and robbed the survivors of any desire save to mourn for the first "Centurion" to fall.

On the other side of the Atlantic the *Weasel* arrived in time, and enabled Commodore Pocock to capture thirty of the convoy and £100,000.

There was one phrase in Hawke's dispatch which puzzled George II, who was never very strong at his English. He asked the Earl of Chesterfield to read the sentence again. "As the enemy's ships were large, they took a great deal of drubbing." When he realized that two of the captured vessels were accounted lucky because they still had a mast apiece, while the other four had none, he began to think "drubbing" a very expressive word. There was always something to be learnt from "his Captain." He was exceedingly pleased with the result, and not a little flattered that this the greatest success since the war broke out, had been achieved by the man whom he had delighted to honour. Under the circumstances he extended the most warm reception to the victorious hero, and thought the Cross of the Bath would look well upon his breast.

And so Sir Edward passed from the presence of Majesty to receive the quieter congratulations of the Government and the deafening applause of the people, who were quick to see that the glory of England had not departed, and that Heaven had sent them one of that godlike race, whom the voice of duty rouses like a trumpet-call.

In 1748 the War of the Austrian Succession was suddenly terminated by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. There were no extraordinary changes in the map of Europe as there had been at the Peace of Utrecht. Maria Theresa was forced to submit to the loss of Silesia. That was all. As in the Spanish Succession War, France, with the resources of Spain behind her, had been confronted by England, Holland and Austria; but the one great soldier, Marshal Saxe, had fought against the Grand Alliance, and the appearance of the strong new power in the north of Germany had neutralized the possibilities of Austrian activity, and set France free at last to push her boundary northward to the Rhine. In 1748 it became manifest to the English that unless they could exchange Cumberland for another state,

borough, or find an ally who could assist them better, they would be obliged to consent to the annexation by France of the deeply coveted Netherlands

* Why at a height of success never honestly reached by Louis XIV did France relax her grip? Because the twin Battles of Finisterre had crowned Britain undoubted Queen once more of her rightful domain, and left her free at last to strike wheresoever she would. In the year of the Peace, Boscowen, the hero of Finisterre the First, arrived with a fleet off the Coromandel coast. Dupleix, Viceregent in India of the King of France, had captured Madras, the English capital, and threatened to push the English out of the Peninsula as the Dutch had pushed them out of the Indies; but his territorial schemes had blinded him to maritime dangers. The arrival of Boscowen promised to spoil his destiny.*

At the other end of the world Louisburg, the gite of French America, had opened miraculously at a touch from the sceptre of the sea.

The Battles of Finisterre taught France that her position was as perilous as England's. "Yield!" she cried, "or I take the Netherlands!" "In which case India and Canada are mine," replied the Queen of the Floods. "Accept Madras in exchange for Louisburg; and my hand upon it," said France. "Mine also," echoed England, and the Peace was signed.†

* THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR. 1756-1763

When the great powers made peace at Aix-la-Chapelle they paid little heed to Maria Theresa weeping for the loss of Silesia, or to Monsieur Dupleix gnashing his teeth for the retrocession of Madras ‡ In another quarter the Peace was odious. The English

* Boscowen's mere presence in Indian waters was really all that was needed, but he did not succeed in retaking Madras before the war reached a close. Thus his rival Hawke, whose capture of the *Poder* had been eclipsed by Boscowen's share in Anson's victory, now in his turn forged ahead, for the Madras campaign could not hold a candle to Finisterre the Second.

† The need of peace prevented England from staying to barter terms with Spain concerning "Faga" and "Guarda Oostas," which had in 1739 involved her in the toils of war.

‡ No sooner were signatures affixed than Dupleix renewed his schemes to make Louis XV *Primus in Indis*. The rapidity of his success and its menace to British power raised up an antagonist in Robert Clive. Winning his spurs

colonists in America were beside themselves at the callous heartlessness of the motherland in restoring Louisburg to the French. Of what interest to them was it that France had been persuaded to evacuate the Netherlands? Why were their interests so deliberately sacrificed? The grievance was intelligible; but the home Government might plausibly argue that Louisburg could never have been taken without the Navy: that Admiral Warren's co-operation gave England a right to dispose of it, and that the cession of the Netherlands would sacrifice all that had been fought for in the wars against Louis XIV. The American colonists were dependent on the Navy, and the Navy would be seriously prejudiced if France were firmly planted on the North Sea coast.

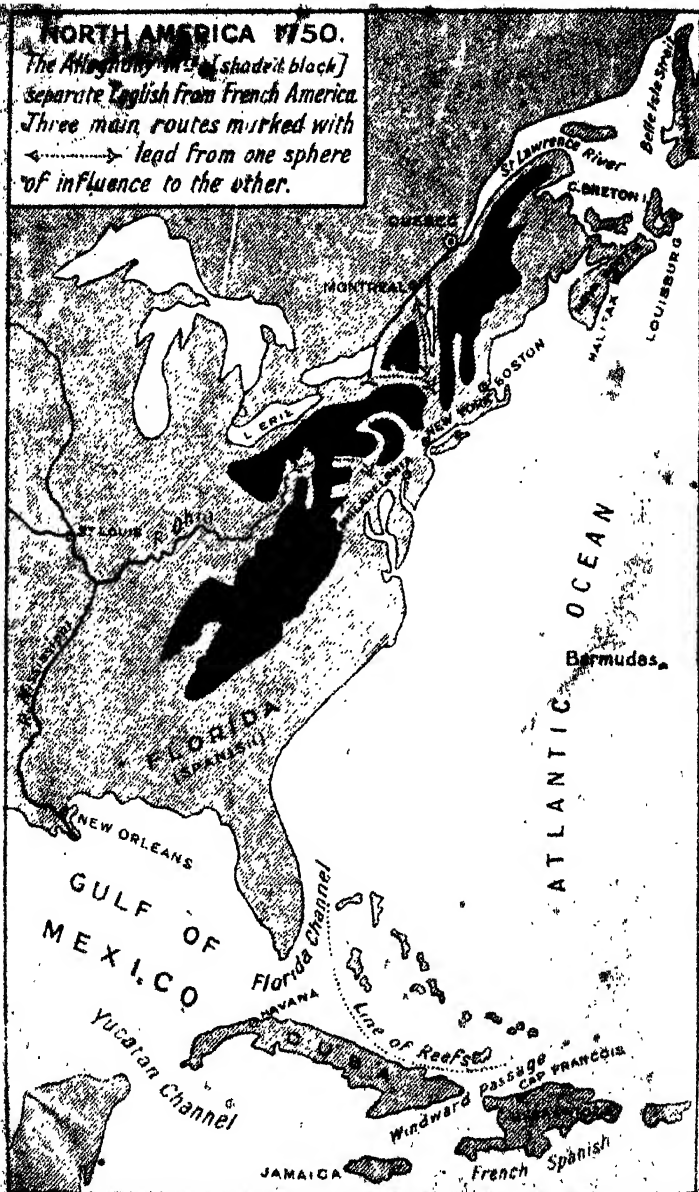
In 1748 the English settlements in North America extended along the Atlantic from Florida, an ill-defined province of Spain, to Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and the Hudson Bay, ceded to Queen Anne by the Treaty of Utrecht. Westward the Alleghanies, for the time at least, narrowed their limits most appreciably, but north and south the settlements made a sturdy chain, unbroken save for the French occupation of Cape Breton Isle. The colonists were numerous and independent. Their communities were ever expanding, and the difficulties of their situation made them quick to see what was wanted, and fearless in dealing with the troubles that beset them, whether the horrors of starvation or the tomahawks of the Iroquois and Choctaws.

While the English were gradually filling up the eastern seaboard (1600-1750), the French worked their way up the St. Lawrence, planting little villages along its banks, and ever proceeding semi-consciously farther and farther behind the English homesteads. At Lake Erie they abandoned the Laurentian basin, and found their way into the valley of the Ohio. They pushed on southward down the Ohio until they discovered the Gulf of Mexico and the mouth of the Mississippi. They hemmed in the English as completely as Rhodesia encircled the Dutch South African Republics. But their numbers were insignificant, and they lacked the self-reliance and self-help which distinguished the Virginians and New Englanders.

at Arcot, Clive cut the ground from under his rival's feet, and laid the foundations of British supremacy in the Peninsula. Dupleix was recalled to an ungrateful country in 1754.

NORTH AMERICA 1750.

The Alleghany Mts. (shaded black)
 separate English from French America.
 Three main routes marked with
 ←-----→ lead from one sphere
 of influence to the other.



It required no unusual foresight to see that the close proximity of two growing powers must lead to trouble, so long as no definite line of demarcation was drawn to show where American England ended and American France began. In 1748 the question was ripe for mischief, and its urgency led to the appointment of a delimitation committee to settle the intricate question of boundary claims. Until this tremendous task was complete it was tacitly agreed to regard the intermediate Indian tribes as strictly neutral ground.

The French settlers were like a small brave force acting behind fortifications (the Alleghanies). Until Admiral Warren showed them that their entire position could be turned by a water force acting on the St. Lawrence, they had hardly realized the menace of the Englanders who crowded round their gates. The fall of Louisburg alarmed them, and upon its recovery they began with feverish haste to scrutinize their walls and strengthen all their defences.

Three land routes led through the hills from English America to French. The first led northward from New York past Lake Champlain, and the second, at right angles to the first, led due westward to Niagara. The third would take the pioneer up one of a series of valleys that furrow the eastern slopes and converge on the head-waters of the Ohio. To safeguard their wide but thinly populated possessions the French had three main causeways to protect, and knew that when the invaders came westward they would come by one of the three. With this object they constructed Fort Ticonderoga to guard the first gate, Fort Niagara the second, and the famous Fort Duquesne to hold the Ohio valley.* Unfortunately this action was a deliberate trespass, because the forts in question were constructed upon the debatable land unassigned as yet by the Delimitation Committee.

The English colonists at once determined to eject the intruders, and in 1754 marched against Fort Duquesne. Failing to take it they appealed to England to help them right the wrong. England expostulated with France, and in 1755 sent a small force under General Braddock, who was piloted over the sea by Keppel.

* Marquis Duquesne, after whom the fort was named, was Governor of French America, and a descendant of the celebrated admiral to whose ship De Ruyter lost his life.

Century and one of the most famous. The French were not the least contrite and hurried out reinforcements. The English might have blockaded the French ports and prevented the reinforcements from starting; but action so effective was liable to misconstruction. There was peace on the European side of "The Line" even if there was none beyond it.* They preferred to station a fleet in the St. Lawrence mouth, and adopt an uncompromising attitude to the reinforcements when they reached their destination.

The death of Sir Peter Warren in 1752 had robbed the navy of the admiral most conversant with American problems.† Boscawen and Hawke were the men of the moment. Hawke was retained at home in case of new developments, and Boscawen was sent post-haste across the Atlantic. He was instructed not to allow a single ship of the enemy to escape. The injunction accorded well with the inward promptings of "Old Dreadnought." He reached his station and waited. On 10th June his van under a certain Captain Richard Howe, hereafter famous, signalled the appearance of two French ships under his lee. The harbingers of better things to come, thought Boscawen, and nodded to Howe to snap them up. Howe obeyed. But no other ships were seen. Somehow or other, perhaps by using the Straits of Belleisle between Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador, the main French squadron slipped past Boscawen's guard and brought their critical errand to a satisfactory conclusion.

If Boscawen had annihilated the enemy, the overthrow of the French-American schemes would have gone far to justify the stroke; but the capture of the *Alcides* and the *Lily* amounted to a mere slap in the face. The Government of Louis XV who had been dreading a heavy punishment, began with mock gravity to ask what right a "pirate" had to put forward complaints of one or two innocent forts which were incapable of movement and therefore unable to perpetrate acts of atrocity such as the floating castles of England had done in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. France may well have smiled as she looked at her hand, and when the

* Vide supra, p. 135 and n.

† His monument in Westminster Abbey is between that of Gladstone and Disraeli. The realism of the age of Hogarth displays the hero's face pitted with the small-pox.

news came that General Braddock's expedition had been hewn in pieces, her smile broadened, and she asked herself whether she had not underestimated her American pretensions.

On their part the English were naturally crestfallen, and lamenting their folly in ever allowing reinforcements to start, dispatched Sir Edward Hawke to catch the culprit ship on their return. The same good fortune, however, carried them past him unobserved into safety. Unable any longer to contain their wrath the Government now conjured Sir Edward not to stay his hand or limit the sphere of his activities. Unhooded at last the Admiral swept like a falcon through the Bay of Biscay, and sent home three hundred prizes.*

The fencing of England and France in 1755 is at first sight not a little puzzling. There seemed excellent reasons for either to make a declaration of war: yet neither was willing to make it.

England desired to fight with France as she had fought with Philip II. She challenged her adversary to come forth upon the watery element. This did not at all suit France. Before venturing to fight she desired to implicate England in a European war; to bind her to the continent in order to fetter her extremities. Nor was the hope illusory. The King of England was Elector of Hanover, and his position in Germany made him vulnerable. Hanover was the heel of the sea-born Achilles.

The voice of diplomacy is drowned by the alarms at Fort Duquesne, and the excursions of Boscawen and Hawke; but throughout 1755 England and France were devoting the half of their thoughts to this absorbing question of Hanover. In the recent war France had been allied with Spain, and England with Austria. Austria was a stalwart ally, but she had ceased to be valuable since the Peace of Utrecht gave her the Netherlands. England desired no more Fontenoy's. Spain was an excellent friend for France; but she had fought against England long enough. She desired no more descents on Porto Bello or Carthage; no more *Centurions* in the Pacific. Where then were England and France to look for their friend in need? Both

* "I know nothing of the war but that we catch little French ships like crawfish."—Horace Walpole, 18/9/1755.

turned in the same direction. Prussia and Hanover lay alongside like two men-of-war with their broadsides touching.

In 1755 Frederick II was the deputy of fate. He had a choice of invitations. He could not accept them both. Which of his hostesses could work him the greatest injury if he dared to send her a refusal? For a time France flattered herself that she had secured him; but about the time that Hawke sent home the crawfish the King of Prussia suddenly arrived at a decision; and for good or evil threw in his lot with the mistress of the sea.

THE LOSS OF MINORCA

CHAPTER I. THE BATTLE

The alliance was a master-stroke for England. It set her free from continental embarrassments. France saw the ground cut from beneath her, a yawning chasm at her feet. What could she do to save America? There was no time to be wasted. The Government decided to collect as noisily as possible a vast army on their northern shore and threaten invasion. To augment the chances of success they prepared an expedition at Toulon to threaten the safety of Minorca. Desperate remedies, depending for their success upon the failure of the British fleet. But times were desperate. The English might be deceived by the Minorca feint and send their battleships off to the Mediterranean. In that case it would be possible to repeat the performance of the Young Pretender. They might on the other hand keep every ship in the Channel. In that case Minorca might actually be won and serve as a sop to Spain whose assistance was more than ever necessary. In any case the plans in combination promised to keep the British Navy busy, to postpone the American question to a more convenient season, allow distracted France to collect her wits, reshuffle the European pack and find some stronger cards.

If anything was needed to prove to the French the soundness of their views, it was supplied by the wild scare that ensued in England. It was certainly disconcerting to hear that 60,000 troops were mustered on the other side of the Channel, and the shadow of the '45 darkened every doorway in the land. The more level-headed pointed out that there was nothing to fear with Boscowen and Hawke to protect old England's shore. But

preparations at Toulon were active, and demanded some share of attention. The English experts were of opinion that the pronouncement about Minorca was a blind; and that an effort would be made as in the past to unite the Mediterranean fleet with the fleet of Brest. They saw the danger of halving the fleet at a critical moment, and they resolved to send a small force which would leave the Channel Squadron unimpaired.

For a commander their choice fell upon the unfortunate and never-to-be-forgotten Byng, Admiral the Honourable John, younger son of Lord Torrington of Passaro. He had himself been present at his father's victory. He had served in the *St. George* under Vernon during the '45, and sat on the court-martial that tried Admirals Mathews and Lestock. His knowledge of Minorca was of the most intimate character, and during the last year of the Austrian Succession War, while Anson and Hawke had been earning glory off Finisterre, he had held the chief command in the Mediterranean.

It was doubtless with some enjoyment of their own acumen that His Majesty's advisers saw through the French design, and reduced the Mediterranean fleet to inconsiderable dimensions. Unfortunately, on this occasion they over-reached themselves. The French were in deadly earnest, and when they realized that the English were not sending out a commander of recognized ability and a reputation based upon past triumphs, when every day convinced them how hazardous the invasion scheme was likely to prove, and how magnificently England was prepared to meet it on the sea, they determined to press home the attack upon Minorca, and deal the English a blow where they least expected it.*

When Byng arrived at Gibraltar at the beginning of May, 1756, he heard that the French design was well in front of his defensive scheme. No less than 16,000 troops under the popular *Maréchal le Duc de Richelieu* had been conveyed from Toulon in 200 transports, protected by twelve ships of the line under the *Marquis de La Galissonière*, a humpbacked little man of fire-eating valour. Landing at Ciudadela on the east of Minorca the duke had led his men across the island, and laid siege to Mahon the capital. Within

* Technically the war began when the English learned that the French had landed their troops in Minorca.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

The town the defence was maintained by a mere handful of 2,000 under General Blakeney, a veteran of eighty-four, many of whose officers were returning from leave in the ships that accompanied Byng.

At Gibraltar according to instructions Byng was to pick up a quota of the garrison and take it with him to Mahon: but the Governor was a man who was hardly worthy of the Rock. He refused to part with the men, "because" (as Anson pithily put it) "he would then have fewer at Gibraltar". He had abandoned hope as regards Minorca, and it is to be feared that his sentiments infected the Admiral. Byng came of good fighting stock. He had had plenty of experience. That he was a fleet commander of merit the battle of Minorca proves: that he was a brave man is proved by the heroic demeanour with which he met the snarling voices that without understanding accused him of crimes that his soul contemned; and by the calm fortitude of the closing scene. But he was not cast in the heroic mould, and the occasion demanded Hawke. As Byng sailed from Gibraltar a growing conviction seized him that even if he met Galissonière and defeated him, he would be powerless to deliver a beleaguered garrison from the clutch of the Duc de Richelieu.

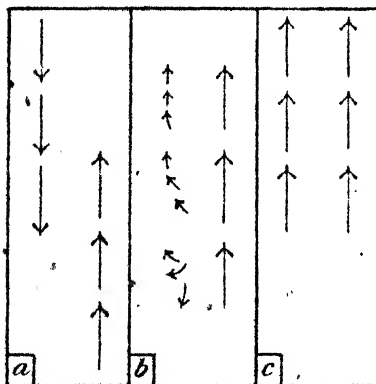
Ten days after leaving Gibraltar, Byng arrived at his destination. He endeavoured to communicate with the garrison, but Monsieur de La Galissonière was not long in challenging his right to interfere, and on 20th May there was fought to the S.W. of Mahon the battle which has given rise to so much controversy. The combatants approached each other from opposite points, the French admiral appearing from the south-east, and Byng standing to meet him from the north-west. Both admirals skirmished cunningly for the wind; but good fortune favoured the Englishman, and with the wind at S.W. the two forces passed each other on opposite tacks; Byng with the starboard tacks on board, Galissonière, in the glorious *Foudroyant*, with the port.

According to the Fighting Instructions, when the opposing fleets met on opposite tacks, the Admiral in command [having the weather gauge] would proceed upon his wind until such time as he judged his van to be conterminous with the enemy's rear.*

* See above, p. 21 n.

At that point it behoved him to go about; tacking, either ship by ship beginning with the rearmost, or all ships together. Unless the fleets, as at Beachy Head, were numerically unequal, the hostile lines would then be coextensive; and with skill and caution parallel. [Below a. b. & c.]

Byng was conversant with all forms and conditions of battle array. He was familiar with the body of Instructions recently amplified under Anson's directing care. He had the artist's admiration for his art; inherited his father's genius; and was not too modest to hazard some originality. He had divided his fleet of thirteen ships, which outnumbered the enemy by a single vessel,



into two divisions only, instead of the customary three. To Admiral West, who had commanded the *Warwick* at Toulon, and served as Flag Captain to Warren at Anson's Finisterre, he committed the rear: the van he commanded himself in the *Ramillies*.* As he led the line past the enemy on the starboard tack, he did not stop when his leading ship came up level with the last ship of the enemy's rear, but continued for a while on the same course. When at last he gave the signal for the fleet to tack, Galissoniere guessed that he was going to double. But Byng did not mean to double. His notion was to obviate the manifest disadvantages of running down straight before the wind by advancing his whole line

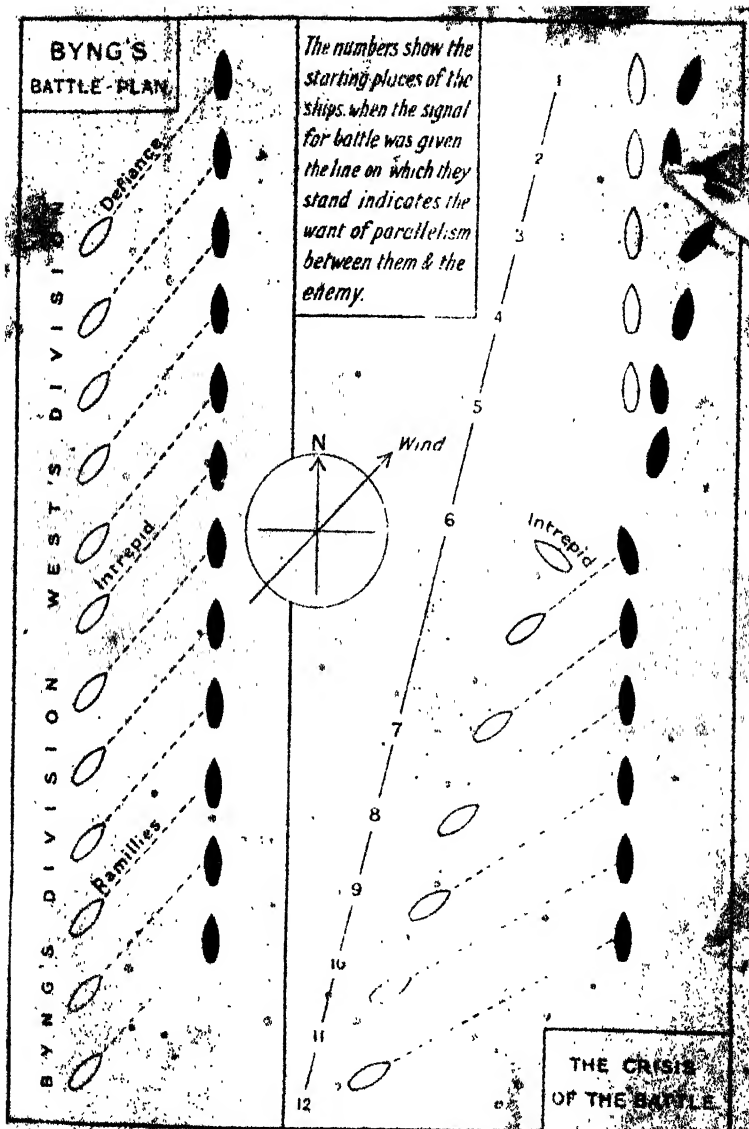
*When the whole line went about, West's division became the van and Byng's the rear.

stantwise, in order that a ship might make the most of her broadside fire as she worked her way into battle. [MAP. BYNG'S BATTLE-PLAN.]

Imagine the Admiral's annoyance when he discovered that the *Defiance*, who in the reversed line was leading the van, had failed to grasp the significance of his manœuvre. Deeming that it was only by some unforeseen accident that the battle was ordered differently from usual, she was doing her best to rectify matters by pulling the line out lengthwise in order to make it coextensive with the enemy's. Byng was profoundly disappointed; and after vain attempts to indicate by signal what he wanted, he hoisted the flag for battle as the only method of engaging the enemy in the manner he proposed. But it was already too late. The ships of the van had already won their normal position. When they saw the signal for battle they rejoiced to think that the period of probation was over, and hurled themselves into battle line abreast; heading each one for her opposite in the enemy's line, and desiring but to conquer or die. True they were rendered liable by their formation to a raking fire, but as that was the ordinary encounter of a fleet in the wind, they thought no more of it than they thought of Byng's agony as he realized into how desperate a trap his plan of action had led him.

It has been said that the opposing lines were generally coextensive and parallel. Of set purpose Byng had avoided symmetrical extension. By accident his line was not parallel to the French. In the process of fencing for the wind, his own division (then the van) had gained to windward; so that, when the whole line tacked, it formed an angle with that of the foe. [MAP. THE CRISIS OF THE BATTLE.]

Owing to the action of the leaders, the want of parallelism in the two lines now became a positive danger. It was well enough for the *Defiance* who had but a short distance to advance under fire. It was well enough for the ships of Byng's division whose sidling advance enabled them to use their broadsides as they moved. The acute point of danger lay in the middle of the line, in the extremity of the van division where the sea distance to be covered by the *Intrepid* was considerably greater than that covered by the *Defiance*, and the method of advance equally direct and exposed.



THE BATTLE OF MINORCA

May 20, 1756

The first five ships of Admiral West's division did splendidly, and forced each an opponent out of the fighting line; but the *Intrepid* came to grief before she could close with her foe. Her fore topmast was shot away, and she swung round into the wind, like an intractable horse defying management. The mischief did not stop here for she caused as much confusion in the rear division as a fractious horse will do when he curvets in the middle of a procession which winds its way along the street. Had the whole line moved into battle at the same moment the accident would have been slight in its operation: but the departure of the *Intrepid* did not merely leave a gap in the English line. Her wild career threw the whole of Byng's sidling column into confusion, and left the French commander wholly free to make the most of a golden opportunity.

Galissonière did not fail to see his advantage. The impetuosity of the English van had carried it to leeward; and unless the rear division was commanded by a leader perfectly self-possessed, he would be able to pass through the yawning gap and cut the English line. Once through the line he would be able to hug the wind, and put the English van between two fires with a reasonable hope of crushing it.

The tables were turned with a vengeance. But at the crucial moment Byng did not lose his head. He saw where lay the need of help; he disentangled the hideous knots that threatened to strangle him; he straightened his line; made sail; occupied the treacherous rift and saved the situation. Foiled, Galissonière satisfied himself with engaging with his fresh ships the English van, now weary with their exertions; and having thus rendered pursuit improbable, he put before the wind and departed; not in headlong flight, but glad enough to get away. "We may justly claim the victory," wrote Byng in his letter home.*

There is room for Byng's self-satisfaction; and yet it is doubtful whether it would not have been really wiser to decline action

* Hawke's instant acceptance of Byng's manoeuvre attests its real value. Sir Edward added to it the little that was needed to complete its efficacy. He instructed the ships performing the movement to align themselves as they advanced, those nearest the enemy marking time (so to speak); those farther away crowding canvas so that the impact might be simultaneous as well as slantwise.

altogether. The position of the Duc de Richelieu was like that of a diver. The vital cord that brought him the essence of life trailed out all the way from Mahon to Toulon. For him it was imperative that the tube should be safeguarded. So long as Galissonière was there unchallenged, there was safety; but when Byng arrived and took up his position, it was as if the diver's tube had been grasped by an iron grip. Galissonière was the challenger, not Byng. If need were great, he must attack even from to leeward. If he failed to do so Byng could exert all his force on the continual compression of the Duc de Richelieu's air-tube. Byng set aside the obvious advantages of his position; and as a goal-keeper will sometimes do in a moment of excitement, dashed into the fray to meet the menace which he saw approaching. What Englishman will blame him?

When the forces of Richelieu realized that the fight was over, and that Galissonière was gone, their spirits sank: that vast force despaired. They conjured up a thousand new perils, they felt that just below the horizon were the English troopships with 20,000 men attended perhaps by another fleet. They were doomed! They had failed to take the town by a coup de main. If Mahon were to be carried by assault, the besiegers would need reinforcements; if worn out by starvation, then constant supplies of food. Who would bring them? This insignificant fleet of thirteen English ships would snap up everything. It was merciless. A day passed. The English, apparently quite at their leisure, repaired their damages and mounted guard. A second day crawled by, and there was Byng like the patient goal-keeper waiting for a second rush. Doubtless now he was ready for any one, and lusty with pride in his recent victory. And no Galissonière. Messieurs, the game is played!

CHAPTER II. ABANDONMENT

Even after all these years Byng is unforgotten and unforgiven. A very large proportion of his countrymen still think of him as the one Englishman in a high position of trust who failed to play the man. Are they wrong? Would they have thought Byng a coward, if they had stood beside that gray-haired old hero Blakeney and with him seen the English flag float in the waterway, with him seen the enemy give way before the English sailors?

blows? Did the people of Lucknow think Colin Campbell a coward when he battered on the gates?

But Mahon was still hard pressed, and the Admiral's work half done. What more had he to do? To wait. What though his ships needed repairs? So long as they could float—to wait. What though his wounded were numerous; and he had no place to put them, no comforts to bestow? To teach men the scorn of death; to console the dying and—to wait. What though a pestilence smote the crews? To fight the spectre and—to wait. What though the foe returned with force renewed and heavier ships? To meet his onslaught, fight while a stick would stand, and a gun could answer; and if again victorious—to wait. To wait till despair fell upon the army of Richelieu who outmatched the garrison by eight to one, and yet was helpless: to wait till British reinforcements, already on the sea, brought him the relief he needed, and the besiegers were in turn besieged. To wait: only to wait.

But Byng did not wait. He abandoned his post. He turned his back on Minorca, left gallant Blakeney to his fate and sailed away!

There have been good men and true like Sir Kenneth in the *Talisman*, who have been lured from their post of trust by some stratagem, or some agonizing motive that robs them of the power of thought. Such men may be forgiven if their cause be just and their advocate eloquent. But what can be said for one who abandons his position through failure to appreciate its importance! The Council of War which Byng held before his departure shows plainly what were the reasons for his abandonment. He argued within himself that he must either fight again or not fight. If he fought and sank the entire French fleet, he could not of himself relieve the town: and if he himself were sunk, the French were at liberty to capture Gibraltar as they would in a few days' time assuredly capture Mahon. On the other hand, if he did not fight and stayed where he was, he would bring no aid to the beleaguered garrison, and a second expedition might slip past him and capture the Rock. He did not see that while he stayed where he was, the command of the sea was his, and the foe could do nothing till his flag came down. He did not see that in the worst event, if the French returned and sank

him at his post, the dying struggles of twelve English ships would rob his enemies of their power for further mischief. He did not see what all but him could see, that his departure amounted to callous, traitorous desertion. He was only anxious to rent in haste, and hurry back to fight the enemy again.

No sooner was he gone than back came Galissonière. If he had sunk Byng's entire squadron his task could not have been more perfectly complete. They were gone: under the wave or over, he little cared. Communications with Richelieu were reopened; reinforcements brought; cargoes unshipped; and supplies thrown into the invaders' lines. Spirits rose high in the camp of the French, but within the walls hearts beat slowly and good hope died. For more than a month after Byng's departure the plucky little force defied the well-fed army of the French: but further than that human endurance could not go, and the Union Jack came down.

Minorca was lost.

CHAPTER III. THE ADMIRAL'S EXPIATION

In England a howl of execration went up, and the unfortunate commander was at once set down as a dastard of meanest villainy. The whole affair was so inexplicable that many saw treachery red-handed. Byng had sold his services to Charles Edward, the Young Pretender! This version accounted for some of the circumstances, but did not satisfy the populace. To them Byng was a rascally craven, meet to be classed with the Kirkbys and Wades. Why he should wait to run till the French had shown him the way, was in truth a little mystifying."

We have lately been told
Of two Admirals bold,
Who engaged in a terrible fight
They met after noon,
Which I think was too soon,
For they both ran away before night!

But as certain details arrived of Byng's ingenious manoeuvres, and its ruination by the overzealous van, new light was thrown on the puzzle.

I said unto brave West, "Take the van, take the van,"

I said unto brave West, "Take the van."

I said unto brave West,

"As you like fighting best,

I in the rear will rest:

Take the van."

Evidently Byng had run away unconscious that West had beaten the enemy without him! This was the "most unkindest cut of all," seeing that the behaviour of the van had robbed Byng's victory of its decisiveness. But to no one on shore was the truth apparent, nor would the truth have been believed if an angel from heaven had pronounced it.

The growling of the thunder had not diminished when Byng, in answer to instant orders, sailed for a homeland whose ports positively bristled with warrants for his arrest. He returned in sorry mood. He was distressed to find that his services were no longer acceptable. Acceptable! If tradition may be trusted, the Premier was at that very time assuring an influential deputation who blatantly voiced the disgust of the City of London: "Yes, yes, yes! We'll hang him of course; of course. Yes. Yes!" If Byng felt nothing but the qualms of uncertainty on his passage home, the devilish demeanour of the populace when he landed at Portsmouth in mid-August must have gone far to disillusion him.

After his arrest he was at first confined at Greenwich, but when at the end of December, the trial began, he was removed to Portsmouth. His judges, four admirals and nine captains, met on board the *St. George*. The President of the Court was Admiral Smith, known to his familiars as "Tom of Ten Thousand" in recollection of the saucy impudence with which as a lieutenant he had forced a French frigate at Plymouth to lower topsails in the presence of his ship. The prisoner was tried in accordance with the Twelfth Paragraph of the Articles of War.* No haste

* Like so much else in the administration of the Navy, the Articles of War had but lately undergone revision at Anson's hands. Ever since the days of James II the twelfth Article had read: "Every person in the fleet, who through cowardice, negligence, or disaffection, shall in time of action, withdraw or not come into fight, or engagement, or shall not do his utmost to take or destroy every ship which it shall be his duty to engage; and to assist all and every of His Majesty's ships, or those of his allies, which it shall be his duty to assist and relieve; every such person, so offending, and being convicted thereof by the sentence of a court-martial, shall suffer death, or such

was shown. All due formalities were respected, and after a month's deliberation the court arrived at a decision, and summoned the prisoner before it for the last time to hear sentence delivered.

As he passed to the *St. George* Byng began to have forebodings. Had he failed to prove that he had borne himself in battle as he would have done under the very eyes of King Dettingen? Would he after all be subjected to the ignominy of a public reprimand? As he came on deck he was met by a friend whose face told its own story, and that a sad one. The Admiral was astonished. "What! have they broke me?" he exclaimed, and when the consoler looked for words and found none, the Admiral again spoke, "Well, well! if nothing but my blood will satisfy them, let them take it." Before the court of doom his countenance changed not, nor did his cheek blench.

The sailor judges acquitted him of cowardice, and they acquitted him of treachery, but they were unable to find that he had done all humanly possible to bring to a happy conclusion the work with which he had been entrusted. They convicted him of negligence and the punishment was death. Byng heard the sentence with the same resignation with which he would doubtless have received the news that a wound in battle was likely to prove mortal. There was not a soul on board who was not sorry for him. Some spoke to him of the King's clemency, of the hope of pardon. "Pardon!" he returned mournfully, "what satisfaction can I receive from the liberty to crawl a few years longer with the infamous load of a pardon on my back? I despise life on such terms." The distress of the judges was as genuine as their honesty was transparent. They knew that their finding was right, and the penalty wrong. "For our consciences sake as well as in justice to the prisoner, we pray your lordships in the most earnest manner to recommend him to His Majesty's clemency." No stone was left unturned to rescue the doomed Admiral. Even his enemies, even the French,

other punishment as the circumstances of the offence shall deserve, and the court-martial shall judge fit." In view of certain miscarriages of justice in the Austrian Succession War, and the tendency of lenient courts martial to take too much upon themselves, the words in italics had been ruled out. But the alteration was intended merely to reserve the prerogative of mercy for the crown.

laid petitions before the throne, but all to no purpose. Byng was but human, and he had greatly erred. It was George's place to forgive him. But the King repudiated the divine attribute, and to all appeals returned the same reply. "Was the sentence of the Court at fault?" Even Lord Hardwicke could but admit that the verdict was unimpeachable. "Then," said the King, "it shall stand."

It was on a wild blustering day in March 1757 that the last act of the tragedy was consummated. In Portsmouth harbour every ship had her yards manned. Of the citizens the more curious put off in small craft to be as close as possible; others contented themselves with a more stable post of vantage on the jetty. Admiral Boscawen on board the *Royal Sovereign* signed the death warrant, and gave the necessary orders for the firing party. The scene of the execution was the *Monarque*, a 74 captured from the French. On board marines lined the poop and quarterdeck, the gangways and waist. All the ships in harbour were required to send their officers to witness the execution, but the wildness of the day made it difficult for them to approach. The *St. George*, where the trial had been held, and where Byng had once hoisted his flag, broke from her moorings, in an inanimate attempt to rescue her master or from an infectious sense of impending doom. It had at one time been suggested that the execution should take place on the forecastle, but the poor victim was spared this cruel and unnecessary outrage. On the quarterdeck a platoon of nine marines stood ready; three lines of them, three in a line; the first two lines with bayonets fixed. On the opposite side a cushion, a plentiful supply of sawdust, and a wooden screen completed the grim and ominous arrangements.

At the hour of noon the dread horror of expectancy invaded the breasts of all who were privileged to witness the end. A few minutes later the door of the captain's cabin opened wide, and Admiral Byng stepped out. He was dressed not in the blue and white he wore when he carried the *Ramillies* into action, but in a light-coloured coat that the Navy knew not, nor recognised. In the outer cabin stood a group of functionaries from the Admiralty, wishing themselves elsewhere doubtless; subdued; shifting from foot to foot. The Admiral bowed low to all, and singling out the Marshal he said almost cheerily, "Now, come along, my friend."

and with firm step went out upon the quarterdeck. Here a glance round showed him that all was in order, and in a voice which his dourest enemy could not mistake for anything but a command, he again accosted the Marshal, "Remember, sir, what I have told you relative to this paper;" and he handed him a document with a ceremonious bow. Then turning he walked to the cushion and knelt upon it. One offered to tie the bandage round his eyes,* but the Admiral put him aside without impatience. "Thank God, I can do it myself," he said, and did it as easily as a beau would set his ruffles. For the space of a minute he bent his head in prayer, and then according to a preconceived signal he dropped a handkerchief. The nine marines advanced a step forward and fired. Of six bullets five pierced the body of the Admiral, who yielded up his soul without a struggle and without a groan.†

It may well be said of Byng that "nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it." Not Sir Thomas More, nor Sir Walter Raleigh mounted the scaffold with a quieter demeanour, or died a felon's death, gracing it more the while. But the contemplation of such an end makes it harder to understand why such a character could ever have failed to see where his duty lay, while

* Byng was anxious to look his enemies in the face as he died, and consented to be blindfolded only when he heard that the hateful task of his executioners would thereby be facilitated.

† No one made a more strenuous effort to rescue Byng than Voltaire, the great literary genius of contemporary France. In his novel *Candide*, he describes Byng's death in a passage which will never be forgotten. "Candide" has been brought up to believe that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and in the course of foreign travel is rapidly correcting the impression.

"En causant ainsi ils abordèrent à Portsmouth. Une multitude de peuple couvrait le rivage, et regardant attentivement un assez gros homme qui était à genoux, les yeux bandés, sur le tillac d'un des vaisseaux de la flotte; quatre soldats, postés vis-à-vis de cet homme, lui tirèrent chacun trois balles dans le crâne, le plus paisiblement du monde; et toute l'assemblée s'en retourna extrêmement satisfaite. Qu'est-ce donc que tout ceci? dit Candide; et quel démon exerce partout son empire? Il demanda qui était ce gros homme qu'on venait de tuer en cérémonie. C'est un amiral, lui répondit-on. Et pourquoi tuer cet amiral? C'est, lui dit-on, parce qu'il n'a pas fait tuer assez de monde; il a livré un combat à un amiral français, et on a trouvé qu'il n'était pas assez près de lui. Mais, dit Candide, l'amiral français était aussi loin de l'amiral anglais que celui-ci l'était de l'autre! Cela est incontestable, lui répliqua-t-on; mais dans ce pays-ci, il est bon de tuer des gens en temps et en lieu, un amiral pour encourager les autres."

Minorca claimed his aid. Perhaps no aspect of the tragedy is more pitiful than the misconception under which Byng laboured to the end. Loyal to his King, fearlessly met the foe, confidently went to his death like a brave true gentleman. Had he realised that his return to Gibraltar constituted desertion, he never of course would have left: but he never knew in what he had offended, and died in the conviction of innocence.*

It was of course to Hawke that all men turned when there came bad news from the sea. Without loss of time he set out to right the wrong; to send home Byng, degrade the Governor of Gibraltar, and castigate the fleet of Galissonière. He escorted a new Governor, who might be trusted not to retain at the Rock men whose departure would lessen the garrison (1), and he took as his second "Centurion" Saunders, a kindred soul of approved worth. "A Cargo of Courage" set sail, said the wits.

The unpleasant part of the business was quickly over, but Minorca was already past help, and Galissonière safely bestowed. There was work to be done, however. The fall of Minorca had detracted gravely from British prestige. The Mediterranean states began after the manner of small animals to bark at the lion in his anguish and harry the noble beast with petty irritations. At such a moment the presence of Hawke was invaluable. A storeship *en route* for the Rock was snapped up by the French in the Straits. There was no French port at hand, but the captors dragged their prize into Algeciras. The neutrality of Spain rendered the proceeding illicit, and Hawke demanded the instant release of the ship. The French returned a contemptuous refusal. That the countrymen of Galissonière the Great would chaffer with pygmies who ran away in the middle of a battle was surely a preposterous supposition!

Without a moment's hesitation Hawke lowered his boats, swooped into the harbour, and cut out the prize from under the Spanish guns.

After this the situation became easier.

*The inscription on his monument at Southill, Beds., runs as follows: "To the Perpetual Disgrace of Public Justice, the Hon. John Byng, Esq., Admiral of the Blue, fell a martyr to Political Persecution, March 14th in the year MDCCCLII; when Bravery & Loyalty were insufficient Securities for the Life and Honour of a Naval Officer."

At home the cup of misery rapidly filled, and filling overflowed. In the selfsame month that saw the flag of Blakeney descend, Surāj-ud-Dowlah perpetrated at Calcutta one of the vilest devil-doms recorded in history or myth.* Fortress lost and glory departed: battle and murder, massacre and atrocity. Could national honour lower go!

Ever since Aix-la-Chapelle, the Queen of Hungary, patient as Penelope, had been weaving a web. Hatred for the robber of Silesia was its warp, crossed and recrossed by the woof of diplomacy. With it she hoped at last to enmesh the King of Prussia. Frederick's conduct during the late war had kindled in other than Austrian breasts the sparks of jealousy and dislike; and these he carelessly fanned into flame by his caustic unbridled wit. He made very rude remarks about La Pompadour and the Czarina Elizabeth, and the ladies in question did not relish his jests any the more because they were seasoned with truth. In the fatal autumn of 1756 he found himself faced by a coalition, which included Sweden, Saxony, Poland, Russia, France and Austria.†

Where now to England was the benefit of the Prussian alliance?

* When the news of the Black Hole reached Madras, consternation fell on all. Charles Watson, now an Admiral, was there. His health was bad, and his request for leave had been granted: more, he had been commanded home with all his ships to meet the peril in Europe. But he set his maladies aside, and declared himself ready to disobey orders. He would carry his squadron up the Hooghly to retake Calcutta if the soldiers of Madras would second his efforts on shore. The troops were embarked under the hero of Arcot whose activities were thus transferred to a region where the laurels grew thickly. Calcutta is eighty miles and more from the sea and its mouth is barred by shoals called the Braces. The pilots declared it impossible to carry Watson's flagship, the *Kent*, over the shallows. The Admiral declared that if no one else would guide her in, he would guide her in himself. When Calcutta was near, Colonel Clive went ashore; and as his troops advanced against the enemies' front, Watson turned their flank from the river. Thus the flag came back to Fort William. Plassey followed, and Watson's seamen and guns proved invaluable. It has been said that Watson was sick. The Bengalese climate proved too much for him. He died soon after Plassey, and his tired body was laid to rest in the graveyard at Calcutta. It is to be feared that his monument in the Abbey with its palm trees and oriental chiefs has not sufficed to keep his memory green. It is not that the star failed to shine: it grew dim and vanished in the solar radiance of Clive.

† The unnatural alliance of France and Austria relieved England of one anxiety. Whatever the result of the war, France could not possibly restrain upon the Netherlands.

Where was her boasted detachment from continental concerns? She had hoped that the American question might be settled without reference to Europe. Now she found herself too busy by far to attend to the only matter which justified an appeal to the sword. Meanwhile across the Atlantic the Marquis Montcalm was repeating elsewhere the aggression of Fort Duquesne.

The storm of 1756 bore all the distinguishing features of the deadliest typhoon. Its destructive tendencies called for willing hands, and willing hands were ready: Watson and Clive, Saunders and Wolfe, Boscawen and Anson and Hawke. But still more urgent was the call for a great directing brain that should find for each his allotted task. Now was the moment for the inspiration of an Elizabeth, the clarion voice of a Cromwell, the sober sense of a William III.

It may be conceded at once that Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, England's Prime Minister, did not possess the qualities requisite in his position*. The storm that had arisen was not of his brewing, but this is all that can be said for him. No man of eminence has ever found himself so completely out of his element as Newcastle confronted by a war of world-wide dimensions. No statesman has ever been so mercilessly pelted with flouts and jeers, taunts and derision. He was fussy and incompetent. He lent himself to the caricaturist and satirist. "He lost half an hour at the beginning of the day and ran about till evening looking for it." He was expected to recapture Minorca, flagellate Suraj-ul-

*Walpole (1721-42) had been overthrown by the Cuthagena fiasco: Carteret (1728-44) by the disastrous battle of Toulon. Henry Pelham who followed (1744-54), saw the horrors of the '45 dissipated by the battles of Finisterre. These glories entitled him to the six quiet years of office that followed Aix-la-Chapelle. Without the endowment of genius, he had learned from Walpole the principles that govern finance, and the finance that overrules principle. He had learned also from his master's mistakes, and so far from driving all talented men into opposition, found places in his administration for one man after another till the wits went to the dockyards for a simile and nick-named his Cabinet the Broad-bottom'd Ministry. Pelham enjoyed with infinite relish the exercise of power; and all his actions were regulated by a lime-stick-like desire to stay where he was, whatever the restless tide of events might bring. Just as the New Englanders made their excusable but unfortunate attempt in the valley of the Ohio, he died; and Thomas, his elder brother, slipped into his vacant seat.

HAWKE

Dowry, turn the French out of America, and unravel one of the most complicated tangles in the maze of European diplomacy—and he did not even know that Cape Breton was an island!

In the panic of '45 he had with craven fear offered his services to the Young Pretender. The crisis of '56 was more terrible. It threatened the overthrow not of the Hanoverians but of England. Newcastle may be forgiven if he winced before it. But there was one who did not wince. It was at this moment that there passed into currency a golden phrase which caught the impression of the nation's fancy and remains in circulation to this day: "I know that I can save the country and that no one else can."

The vibrant thrill of Pitt's voice had for long marked him out in the Commons' House. In the autumn of '56 the moulder of England's destiny was already nearly fifty years of age. Three years younger than Hawke he had entered Parliament just at the time that Hawke became a captain. At the outset of his career he had joined his voice with Vernon's in denouncing Walpole's policy of peace, in fulminating against the indignities which England was obliged to suffer at the hands of Spain. He bore down resistance in debate as Hawke pinioned his prey. It was not only that he was gifted with a melodious flow of perfectly chosen words and perfectly harmonized ideas, but behind them pealed the swelling diapason of invincible confidence, idealization of duty, and a love of England that put to shame the greed of sects and the plausible utterances of the trimming place-hunter. As they listened to him men felt conviction in spite of themselves, and those who were put up to answer found sudden truth in the story that the Emperor Augustus could avert the assassin's thrust by the lightning glance of his eye. Though the irreverent wit might vow that the statesman acted with a talent equal to Garrick's, the grandeur of Pitt's deportment and the stateliness of his demeanour supplied the fitting complement to his majestic periods and commanding tone.

When the consuming fire of his zeal had driven Sir Robert Walpole into the quiet seclusion of the Upper House, Pitt found his country menaced by a more insidious danger. George II's attempt to unite the German states in support of Maria Theresa seemed to him childishly meddling and senselessly anti-French.

He assailed it with a vigour that defied correction; and his uncompromising attitude made him a very odious image in the Hanoverian eyes of the King. So bitter became the antipathy of the court, so enduring the royal disfavour that the crisis of '56 found Pitt in a position no more exalted than that which he had occupied when he first entered Parliament twenty-one years before.

The very attributes which estranged the brilliant orator from the court, endeared him to the people, and enshrined him in their hearts. They applauded alike his patriotism and his rectitude. To them he was the "Great Commoner"; and however menacing the aspect of affairs, to them the remedy was obvious. "Away with the Pelhams! Put Pitt at the helm: a pilot to weather the storm!"

So loud, so insistent was the cry, that court and minister bowed before it. Newcastle retired like one who throws away a peach, not because he has lost his taste for the luxury, but because there is a wasp sitting on it. His withdrawal made way for a war minister greater far than any England has produced before or since. To the arts of the statesman Pitt united the subtle gift of ripest generalship. With penetrating gaze he took in every part of the theatre of war and his theatre was coextensive with the world. Proudly conscious of England's strength upon the sea, he recognized the power of his enemies upon the continent. He did not boast of his own advantages, or thrust them before the notice of his rivals. He encouraged the belief that his own schemes were also continental, in order the more successfully to screen his plans of oversea dominion. "I will conquer America," he said, "upon the plains of Germany."

It was not only that like Marlborough, he "taught the doubtful battle where to rage." As on the field Marlborough would mask his movements till the last moment; and when all was ready, reveal a disposition of infantry and cavalry that the enemy had little suspected: so the great war minister with the threads of diplomacy entirely in his keeping, revealed his projects only when it was too late to counteract them; and manipulated his striking forces, Navy and Army, with a perfect and unprecedented appreciation of their possibilities.

More than all he was an innovator, and handled the Navy and Army in combination as they had never been handled before.

In the development of services so different there had been a natural tendency for the military advisers of the crown to draw up the military programme, and the naval advisers to draw up the naval. In the result a want of harmony often went far to vitiate the general scheme of offence. Under Pitt's system the year's campaign was arranged in consultation with the rulers of Navy and Army. The needs were then made known to the subordinate departments, but the plan itself kept secret. An army would be mobilized, and a fleet equipped and commissioned without a soul outside the cabinet knowing for what purpose the armament had been prepared.

To those who had served under the old regime this was a revolution, and the strangeness of the change is attested by the usual series of apocryphal stories. According to these Pitt would draw up instructions for the fleet, rush at Lord Anson, put his hand over the instructions, and force the trembling Admiral [Anson trembling!] to affix his signature without the faintest notion what the fleet was expected to do: or he would threaten the First Lord with impeachment if all preparations were not ready within an absurdly short time-limit, producing such an effect by his spirited menace that the men-of-war were all equipped according to the time and manner appointed. It is a shame to scatter such excellent myths; but all are falsified by the one obvious fact that Anson himself was in the cabinet. They serve however to show the natural annoyance of a department hustled into making arrangements without being shown the cause.

It was in November 1756 that the Duke of Newcastle retired. But the dispensation of favours by his family for more than a decade had won him a control over the Commons that frustrated the schemes of Pitt. "The great minister had hardly entered office before he was compelled, "amid a shower of gold boxes," to leave. "As the country refused to have the Duke, and the Duke's supporters refused to have Pitt, there ensued a deadlock which could only be removed by the union of contraries. In June 1757 a joint-stock company was floated under the management of Pitt and Newcastle.* But in the meantime priceless time had been lost and England's enemies continued their insolent career unchecked. On one side of the Atlantic the French made fast

* "Mr. Pitt does everything, and the Duke of Newcastle gives everything."

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

held on all the three great Alleghany gaps, and massed their forces at Louisburg the Gibraltar of the West. On the other side of the Atlantic, Frederick of Prussia was defeated with the loss of 13,000 men, and contemplated suicide; while the Duke of Cumberland, Butcher of Culloden, by a shameless compact made a virtual surrender of Hanover to the French.

Early in 1757 at Pitt's request Hawke returned from the Mediterranean. He had already done much to re-establish British prestige, and he left his fleet in the strong safe hands of Saunders. Pitt was of course anxious to hear the Admiral's opinion on the late miscarriage, after viewing the situation at close quarters. In his own opinion Byng had been innocent. Hazarding his popularity he had spoken boldly when Byng was condemned. He had even remonstrated with the King. He regarded the unfortunate Admiral as atoning by his death not for his own sins, but for the sins of Newcastle, who had allowed him to sail with a paltry force, insufficient and ill-equipped.* Hawke bluntly combated his arguments. Supposing that the preparations had been inadequate, he had no doubt in his own mind that if he had been in Byng's place he would either have defeated Galissonière, or died in the attempt. But he would not even admit that the preparations had been inadequate. Why? Because they had been set on foot by Lord Anson than whom the Admiralty never had and never could have a better head. Now one of Pitt's most valuable qualities was his ability to estimate quickly the measure of the fulness of a man's stature. He recognized in the sailor before him not only the brilliant commander that his deeds proclaimed him; but a man of stubborn views, whose loyalty, love of country, and sterling honesty held up the glass to his own ideal of what a patriot should be. Was Hawke's estimate of Anson correct? Was Anson after all something better than a Ducal hireling? Hawke's words went far to remove the mischief which the Minorca scandal had wrought. The silent father of the Navy had been driven into retirement. But now at Pitt's own invitation he returned to the Admiralty;

* Newcastle's attitude towards Byng (sp. p. 226) was probably occasioned by a belief that his own precious neck was in danger.

and in his quiet unaffected way contributed as fully as any one to the lustre of the great administration.

ROCHEFORT

SEPTEMBER 20-30, 1757.

Despite the fiery impetuosity of Pitt, the energy of Hawke, and —Anson's fear of impeachment, the first enterprise of the new ministry was not in readiness till the autumn was far advanced. No details leaked out, and in profoundest silence an expedition set forth leaving friends and enemies equally mystified. Every one knew that Hawke commanded the ships, and that there would soon be news of a great success. There were sixteen battleships, and Hawke in the *Ramillies* had the support of Admirals Knowles and Brodrick. Knowles had served under Vernon in the West Indies, and during the Forty-Five. Later in the war he had himself commanded in the Indies, and in action with the Spanish squadron captured one ship and put the rest to flight. Court-martialled on his return for the insufficiency of his efforts he left the court with a reputation for gallantry well advertised. He was a clever man, highly strung, overbearing and very garrulous, putting his friends to flight almost as quickly as his enemies. Brodrick was another disciple of Vernon and had taken out the reinforcements for which Byng declined to wait. Hawke's sixteen captains included Keppel, Byron, Rodney, Barrington, Denis and Howe.

This redoubtable band had under their all-puissant wings a convoy of fifty-five vessels, an army nearly 10,000 strong, a flotilla of bombships and light craft, and even a squadron of horse. The soldiers were under Sir John Mordaunt, a nephew of the famous Earl of Peterborough; but an old man now, and inclined to be critical of the civilian eccentricities of William Pitt. Mordaunt had several eminent lieutenants, but none destined to draw upon himself so much attention as his chief of staff, a young man of thirty with red hair, who "was in a quite unheroic state of corporal prostration a few hours after sailing". Born in 1721, James Wolfe had already lived through many venturesome days, and given ample evidence of his valour, enthusiasm, and ability. When his father accompanied Ogle to the Main as Adjutant-General to

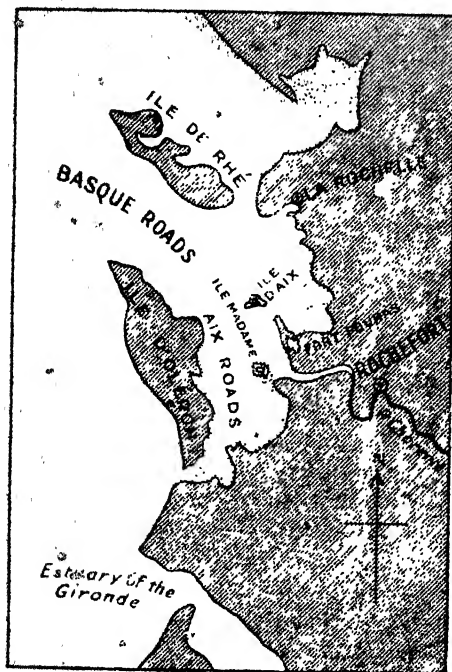
the forces, sickness alone prevented him from going also. Four years later, still little more than a boy, he had been through the crimson day at Dettingen. He fought at Falkirk, and at Culloden; and is said to have protested against the brutal butchery which followed the Jacobite overthrow. In the latter years of the Austrian Succession War he had won fresh laurels in the Netherlands, and the peace had found him a lieutenant-colonel though but recently out of his teens.

The point aimed at by the expedition was Rochefort. Situated on the river Charente, the town is set back from the sea as far as Southampton from the Solent, and is eighteen miles from La Rochelle. The Charente empties its waters into the Aix Roads, which lose themselves in the ten broad miles of the Basque Roads between the isles of Oléron and Rhé. The site had been chosen by Colbert and approved by Vauban, who had erected Fort Fouras and attendant batteries on the northern bank of the estuary; a bastion on the Ile Madame opposite, and a frowning tower bristling with guns on the Ile d'Aix in the waterway.

In 1757 the English knew very little about the place, and laboured under very natural misconceptions concerning its geography. The map that Hawke possessed was a positive handicap. Thereon the Basque Roads appeared a passage perilous, beset with shoals, in the midst of which the island fort sat like a siren inviting victims. If these dangers were overcome the rest appeared easy. The whole force would advance; and while the town was bombarded by the fleet, the army would be landed and race forward with scaling-ladders and capture the place out of hand. The town could then be burnt, the ships in the river destroyed, and the fortifications blown into the air. To minimize the chances of mishap the expedition included a Huguenot refugee, who was however not more trustworthy than the map. He may have valued his religion more highly than his blood. He probably valued his stipend more than either. He certainly was not false, but he knew no more of Rochefort than the English did.

The fleet reached its destination on 20th September full late for operations in the Bay of Biscay. The weather proved unpropitious, and it was not until three days had passed that Sir Edward was able to order the grand assault upon the terrors of the island of Aix. For this task he commissioned the van under

Admiral Knowles. But the opening of the attack proved the first of the many surprises which this expedition had in store. The Basque Roads were utterly void of offence, and the island fort proved no impregnable fortress. The roadstead of Aix was so wide that there was ample room for the fleet to lie under the shelter of Oléron quite out of range of the bristling guns, had they desired to do so. They did not desire to do so; and the leader



ROCHEFORT

1757

of the van, Captain Howe, drew upon himself the admiration of all as at midday on 23rd September he took the *Magnanime* within forty yards of the fort and opened fire. It is said that the sight of his 74 moving along in stately solemn silence was too much for the gunners in the fort; and that they threw themselves down upon their faces and refused to rise. Some such legend is almost

necessary. After a cannonade of less than two hours, the island of Aix was won, and offered the happiest augury for the success of the whole adventure.

Before the day was over Wolfe who ceaselessly endeavoured to bring matters to an issue, clambered up to the topmost bastion, and from that post of vantage surveyed the scene eastwards to the goal. Immediately in the front of him lay the fortifications on the north side of the river mouth. If Rochefort was to be taken these must first be mastered; and he descended from his perch firm in the conviction that the more speedily the task was undertaken, the more certainly would it meet with success.

According to his own estimate three ships and 500 men would be sufficient. This opinion was endorsed by Hawke, who felt his share in the business incomplete until the soldiers were ashore. Therefore he detailed Admiral Brodrick to look, for a suitable landing-place, and prepared to move forward certain of the ships for a direct attack riverwards upon Fort Fouras. The mock-pilot undertook to guide the ships appointed to their destination if he were allowed to lead the way in the *Magnanime*. The only objection to the *Magnanime* was that she drew too much water. Still he persisted. Asked his reason he replied: "Parceque le capitaine 'Owe est jeune et brave." This was a good reason, but once more it became evident that the expedition was sadly lacking in local knowledge.

The Isle of Aix served as an outpost for Rochefort town. The river itself did not admit of the entrance of ships fully equipped. Experience quickly proved that it would not be possible to repeat against Fort Fouras the success achieved at Fort Aix, for not even a bomb-vessel could approach within range. Howe's admirer vehemently asserted that it was quite impossible to approach any nearer than the ships were at the moment, and this disappointing intelligence went far to damp the ardour induced by the initial success. So the first day ended.

On the following day, 24th September, spirits rose again. Admiral Brodrick's search party returned with the news that they had found the very place where a landing could be effected without wetting one's shoes. It lay to the north side of the Isle of Aix within a couple of miles of the forts that seemed so inaccessible. To Hawke, who expected an immediate landing, Mordaunt's

announcement of a Council of War to sit (all being well) on the following day came like a palsy numbing limbs and thoughts.

This celebrated synod met early in the morning, and sat the day out, talking, arguing, proving and disproving. The same old arguments were flung from side to side, picked up and flung again like so many tennis-balls. Sir Edward registered a mental vow that never again would he willingly take part in such barren disputation. He was disappointed that the muddy shallows prevented ships from taking a more active part in the final assault; but at least he had brought the army to its destination and was ready to plant them on the shore. All he asked was that something might be undertaken and that quickly. Had Wolfe been sufficiently senior to make his voice heard, there can be no doubt that the Admiral would have had an enthusiastic supporter. But Mordaunt had quite a different way of looking at the problem. With much show of reason he argued that the declared object of the expedition was the capture of Rochefort by escalade. That operation was only possible if the town were unprepared for the assault; if, for example, the fleet had entered the Roads on 20th September, landed the troops at once, and enabled them to deliver an attack a few hours after they were sighted. What were the facts? The day following would be the 26th. Almost a week had passed since the enemy had received news of their approach. During that week troops had probably poured into Rochefort from every side; guns had been refurbished; defences stoutened; everything put in readiness. There was only one way now to capture Rochefort—by regular siege operations. But no siege-train had been provided. Obviously Rochefort would not yield to a handful of men with scaling-ladders. What then? For what object should they land? For a raid? And supposing the raiders were repulsed (as they were certain to be if the French had utilized the past days as they should have done), could the fleet guarantee to carry them off with the same ease with which they landed them? Even Sir Edward Hawke would be fain to admit that his ability to do so would depend upon the state of the weather. Was it then worth their while to risk the safety of the whole army for the doubtful advantage of a reconnaissance in force? As they hadn't got a siege-train, and Rochefort couldn't be taken without one, it was a

little difficult to see what object there was in going ashore at all. What did Sir Edward Hawke think?

Sir Edward Hawke thought that the summing-up to which he had listened would be more becoming to the judicial bench than a cabin in a man-of-war; but he gripped himself and did not say so. He would doubtless have liked to say what should be done, but he felt that the water part of the expedition was over, and that any expression of opinion would trespass upon a province purely military. He therefore ended where he began by a further delivery of his conviction that something should most certainly be done. Mordaunt misconstrued his tone, and adduced similar arguments to those already uttered. After an all-night sitting it was unanimously agreed, in the early hours of 26th September, that Rochefort could not be taken with a bundle of ladders. Anxious to obliterate the impression of superiority which he had by accident conveyed, Hawke agreed in a resolution which as a sailor he was powerless to combat; and in the words of Wolfe, "the result of the debates was unanimously not to attack the place they were ordered to attack, and for reasons which no soldier will allow to be sufficient."

The persistency of Hawke's declaration was not without its effect, and for the next two days every one did his best to discover some plan of action which should enable the services to pull together. Keppel, and Rodney, and Howe, acting under Hawke's directions, were untiring in their efforts, and Wolfe redoubled his activities. The need of action was accentuated by the temper of the rank and file, who quite failed to understand the niceties of a situation which so completely baffled the military Commander-in-Chief.

The devoted efforts of the naval men to push their ships nearer inshore, and the growing disaffection of the soldiers at last induced Mordaunt to descend to the obvious, and land his troops for an attack in force on Fort Fouras. The night of the 28th was chosen, and the force was embarked, but the weather proved villainous, the boats were quite unable to proceed, and the enterprise was pronounced impracticable even by the most intrepid. While time had passed in dalliance, October had come round and the weather offered no promise of improvement.

HAWKE

On 7th October, 1757, Pitt's armada dropped anchor in Spit-head, and so ended Hawke's only failure.

The home-returning warriors were received in a manner sufficiently frigid. The feelings of the people found vent in muffled peals of bells and kindred exhibitions of irony. Dissatisfaction was universal and loud-mouthed. Pitt, bitterest of all, solemnly declared "that there was a determined resolution, both in the naval and military commanders, against any vigorous exercise of the national power." His anger was natural but hardly justifiable. He knew that his scheme was good. Because it had failed, he began to fear that England could no longer breed the glorious men that had done great deeds in the past. He had set great store by his scheme: he had hoped by an exhibition of England's might to cut into shreds the devices of the French; to disconcert them by the panic of invasion, and induce them to squander all their efforts on defence; to upset their projects and plans; to distract their attention from America to the vulnerable points on the Biscay coast; to recall their troops from the Hanoverian frontier; to stay the current of their uniform success.

In these particulars the expedition to Rochefort was not unfruitful. It did show the ease with which England could convey a great fighting force over sea; it did make the French very anxious for the safety of their coasts; and it did undoubtedly relieve the pressure on the German side. Yet there was something wanting. If Rochefort had been burnt to the ground, as Cadiz had been in 1596, the blunt perceptions of the English mob would have apprehended a national triumph. The same blood and fury, instead of merely inclining the French to listen to Mr. Pitt's arguments might have convinced them of his eloquence.

The popular voice singled out two names for encomium, Howe who had in the *Magnanime* so fearlessly engaged the batteries of the Ile d'Aix, and Wolfe whose declaration that he would take the place with three ships and 500 men, found much honour, especially among those least able to appreciate its significance. Horace Walpole says that Howe and "Wolfe contracted a friendship like the union of a cannon and gunpowder."* These were

* Barrow, the biographer of Howe, garnishes the phrase with becoming embroidery: "Howe, strong in mind, solid in judgment, firm of purpose is the cannon: the gunpowder is Wolfe, quick in perception, prompt in execution, impetuous in action."

men after Pitt's own heart, and the expedition which brought them so prominently before his notice cannot be dismissed as unfruitful.

The apparent failure of the venture, and the wholesale execration heaped upon it wounded Hawke most deeply. He was conscious that he had done all in his power, but he knew that it was impossible to dissociate himself from what had happened. Men said how strange it was the event miscarried when Sir Edward Hawke was there. This hurt him more than all, and the recollection of his own impotence aggravated his misery. In time, however, the details of the story came out; and all, from highest to lowest, hastened to exonerate him. It is said that the King was first; that he summoned "his Captain" to Court, and greeted him effusively while he scowled at poor Sir John. Like enough he did, even if the story were an invention. The country took Sir Edward to its heart again, and even Pitt must have felt some compunction for the scathing way in which he had consigned admiral and general alike to the same degradation of criminal negligence.

Within a month of Rochefort there was presented in the West Indies a very striking contrast to Mordaunt's barren, tedious Council of War. The scene was Cap François, on the northern side of Hispaniola. Wrested from Spain by French buccaneers, the place derived real importance when the growth of New Orleans demanded safe transit through the windward passage. [Map, p. 212.] Cap François, being to windward of Jamaica, commanded the home-returning British trade, and in time of war invited reprisals.

Hearing that the French convoys for the year were assembling, the Admiral at Jamaica sent Captain Forrest to lay an ambush eastward of Cap François. Captain Forrest with three ships took up his station; and Monsieur de Kersaint, in the conscious superiority of seven sail, determined to remove him. Forrest summoned a *Council of War*! As soon as Captains Suckling and Langdon, his colleagues, appeared in the gangway, he hailed them: "Well, gentlemen, you see they are come out to engage us. What think you?" "I think," said Captain Suckling, "that it would be a pity to disappoint them."

This expression of Captain Suckling's sentiments won the entire approval of Captain Langdon, and the shortest Council of War

ever held concluded with a brief summing up from Captain Forrest. "Very well then; go on board your ships again, and prepare for action." The junior captains had not even set foot on their superior's quarterdeck.

The fight lasted three hours. Suckling led the *wee line* in Boscawen's *Dreadnought*; Forrest followed, and Langdon brought up the rear. Few actions have been conducted in more spirited fashion. With the wind in their favour the dauntless three attacked the *van* of the enemy; and the efforts of the rear to bring assistance (being without method) produced a confusion by which the English did not fail to profit. The battle was bloody, and the triumvirs were at its conclusion quite unable to move. But they were left undisputed masters of the field, and the sight of Monsieur Kersaint and his friends being towed into safety brought its own peculiar consolation.

As the first victory on the waves since Minorca the battle was in 1757 most heartily welcome. It proved that the spirit of Grenville still survived, and bore promise of better things. To-day the action is still remembered because the captain of the *Dreadnought*, with his slight, spare frame and quizzical face, lived to be Controller of the Navy, and offered to provide for one of his sister's sons. When he heard which nephew had elected for the sea, he wrote: "What has poor Horatio done, who is so weak that he, above all the rest, should be sent to rough it . . . ? But let him come; and the first time we go into action a cannon-ball may knock off his head and provide for him at once." Captain Suckling, like his ancestor Sir John, the Cavalier Poet, had a knack of saying a few quaint things which will never be forgotten. As for Horatio, he did not have his head knocked off by a cannon-ball, but was killed by a musketeer's bullet from the fighting top of the *Redoubtable* on another glorious 21st October when he crushed the united fleets of France and Spain in the Battle of Trafalgar.

1758.

Notwithstanding Rochefort and Cumberland's mishap, 1757 may be regarded as a year of happy memory. In June, the chilling horrors of the Black Hole were avenged on the battlefield.

of Plassey. In November, Frederick of Prussia crushed the French at Rossbach, and ere Europe had recovered her breath meted out the same chastisement at Leuthen to the forces of Maria Theresa. Frederick became the most popular man of the moment in England, and deservedly. In fighting his own battles, he fought for England, seeing that Hanover was now defenceless. "I believe," wrote Horace Walpole, "the Pretender himself could get his attainder reversed if he would apply to the King of Prussia."

Thus there was a certain balance to carry forward to the next year's account, and it was with something like a cheerful heart that Pitt took in hand his plan of campaign for 1758. Cumberland's treaty was thrown into the waste-paper basket; the Hanoverian army taken into English pay; and the services of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, one of Frederick's most talented lieutenants, secured for its command. It was hoped that Frederick and Ferdinand, back to back, would be able to keep Europe at bay. But it was not of course on Europe that Pitt's thoughts were bent. Nothing less than the conquest of America would please him, and his first anxiety in the new year was to open his transatlantic attack. The principal armada, amphibious in its nature, was to be hurled against Louisburg, while land expeditions against Fort Duquesne and Fort Ticonderoga would distract the enemy's attention. For the command of the land forces at Louisburg Pitt selected General Geoffrey Amherst who had shown some skill in Germany, and General Wolfe who had made his fortune at Rochefort. A fleet of twenty, equal to all emergencies, was put under Boscawen, whose adventures in the St. Lawrence before the war marked him out for this service.

Boscawen set out very early in the year in order to be first on the scene. The French, alive to their responsibilities, instituted everywhere preparations for the relief of the town and the reinforcement of the garrison. In the Mediterranean and Biscayan ports work ceased not.

No place was busier than Rochefort, the scene of the recent fiasco. Five ships of the line, seven frigates and forty transports for the convoy of 3,000 troops awaited the finishing touches. Every hand was employed, and the stroke of hammer, the creak of cordage, and the shouts of overseers recalled the scene at Cadix in 1587. There was need of haste. Time was getting on, and

the first week of April was already gone. But there was little more to be done: a few more spars to be slung; a regiment or two to be embarked.

Then without a word, without a note of warning fell the blow. On 8th April Hawke sighted the Ile d'Oléron. His previous expedition was to bear its fruit after all. He knew the way. He knew the anchorage, and head down he plunged straight in with seven of the line, himself leading. He had a free hand this time, and there was to be no mistake. The five battleships, the seven frigates, and the forty transports did not need to be told who it was. They guessed, or knew by instinct. There was nothing to be done. They cut their cables, and helter-skelter they fled for their lives. Compared with the terror behind them, the shallows before them wore a kindly aspect, and with wild precipitancy they hurled themselves where no ship that desired to remain afloat could possibly venture to follow them. The luckiest ran aground, the less fortunate fell sprawling on their beam-ends, and wallowed in the mud. They did not dream of fighting. Their one idea was how to escape. They began to cast everything portable overboard. Not guns only, but everything that would lighten their load. When at last the tide came in, each unfurnished hulk, once a luxurious ergosy, left a buoy to mark the immersion point of her jettisoned armament, and squirmed or crawled into the navigable channel of the Charente.

This edifying spectacle did not bring Hawke much pleasure. Nothing short of completeness satisfied him, and the Rochefort ships had escaped destruction. He had with him nothing smaller than frigates. Of sloops, bomb-vessels and fire-ships he had none. He had foreseen the need, and had vehemently protested when his request had been ignored. He could but think that a splendid opportunity was lost. After destroying for the second time the sprouting battlements on the Isle of Aix, he collected the buoys that the enemy had so carefully laid down to mark their buried treasure; and left the anchorage, secure in the conviction that Boscawen would not be molested in his work by ever a ship that hailed from Rochefort.

The Mediterranean reinforcements were no more successful. Monsieur de La Clue, who had seconded Gallassonière in the battle of Minorca, hoped to run through the Straits on a dark

February night. With a squadron of nine, he left Toulon, but the vigilant guardians of the Straits forced him back. In defiance of custom he found a temporary haven in neutral Carthage, but as he closed the door behind him Admiral Saunders locked it from without. The Government anxious for his relief sent six more ships under the Marquis Duquesne who hoisted his flag in the *Foudroyant*, the pride of the navy of France. Duquesne hoped to unlock the door in the dead of night and release his admiral; but miscalculated his position, and as twilight was falling came within sight of the blockading squadron.

Three English ships challenged the Marquis, and compelled the *Foudroyant* to turn before the wind. One was the *Monmouth*. She had but 64 guns. Theoretically she was unfit to sail the same sea as her quarry. But she had two great advantages. She was as clean-heeled as a sleuth-hound, and she was captained by a man with a story. Arthur Gardiner had been Byng's Flag Captain in the *Ramillies*. He had a debt to pay to honour. He had panted to meet, in a ship of his own, the vessel that had carried Galissonière's flag in the fateful Battle of Minorca. Could he recognize the lines of the *Foudroyant* through the curtain of gathering dusk?

As the *Monmouth* slipped through the water leaving her consorts behind, he piped all hands and addressed them. "That ship has to be taken, my lads. I shall fight her until the *Monmouth* sinks." One broadside from the *Foudroyant* would have sent his ship to the bottom; but he laid her under the great ship's stern and gave her his larboard and starboard guns alternately. Even so the contest was unequal. As the hours passed the casualties in the *Monmouth* grew redder. Gardiner himself received a wound, but his grip on the foe was a bull-dog's and he did not move from his place.

Two hours before midnight he received his death, and with his last whisper confided his honour to Lieutenant Carkett. Carkett nailed his flag to the mast to prevent accidents. But the spirit of Gardiner animated the whole company, and when the *Swiftsure* came up at midnight, the *Foudroyant*, with mizen gone by the board, was still vainly struggling to shake the little *Monmouth* off. The *Swiftsure* flung herself into the fight. Her angry broadsides thundered out, and Monsieur Duquesne bowed to fate, and—

superior numbers. It was to Lieutenant Carkett that he surrendered his sword.

The capture of the flagship that had driven Byng home, the capture of the Marquis who had driven the American colonists like sheep from the Ohio valley, almost choked the English people with a sob of satisfaction, and as the tears of joy glistened in their eyes, they hailed the little *Monmouth* up and down, while King George patched up the *Foudroyant*, added her to his fighting line, and gave Lieutenant Carkett the post rank he had earned.

As for Monsieur de La Clue and his battle squadron they remained at Carthagena, not more to be envied than sundry vessels of war uncomfortably disposed in the Charente.

On his return to England Hawke ruffled his feathers, and meditated broodingly upon the ill-fortune that attended his flights to the Bay of Biscay. The name of Rochefort was hateful to him. His first visit had been ruined by Councils of War, his second by a want of barest necessities. Was he held responsible? Greatly he feared it. If not, why had he received no word of acknowledgment, no single line since his home-coming?

At the beginning of May his worst suspicions were confirmed. As he awaited further commands at Portsmouth, he received a visit from Richard Howe. The young man was a prime favourite of his, almost [it may be said] his chosen disciple. Hawke had a high opinion of his perfect fearlessness, and had given him at Rochefort a great opportunity. But he came commissioned by the ministry to make a descent upon the coast of France, and the Admiral commanding at Portsmouth was instructed to supply him with all that he required. So this was the end. Hawke read between the lines of his instructions and saw it all. Pitt's unjust taunts and puzzling silence were clear as daylight now. If the captor of Aix had commanded in chief Rochefort would have yielded to his blows! The young man without desiring it had supplanted him; and for what he had failed to do through no fault of his own he himself now stood condemned.

Without a moment's delay Hawke seized a pen and delivered himself as follows:—

PORTSMOUTH, 7 o'clock, May 10, 1758.

Sir,—About four o'clock arrived here Captain Howe and delivered me the Lordships' order of the 9th. In last September I was sent out to command an expedition under all the disadvantages one could possibly labour under, arising chiefly from my being under the influence of land officers in Council of War at sea. Last cruise I went out on a particular service, almost without the least means of performing it. Now every means to ensure success is provided; another is to reap the credit. . . . I have therefore directed my flag immediately to be struck . . . for no consequence that can attend my striking it without orders shall ever outbalance with me the wearing it one moment with discredit.

I am, &c.,

E. HOWE.

Here with a vengeance was a shaking of dust from one's feet. But whatever may be thought of the letter's tone, the world would hardly expect Sir Edward Hawke to answer otherwise.

What was the truth? Was Howe's mission an intentional insult? Was Pitt rejecting the finest instrument he had? Was this an example of his courage in lifting a junior over the head of less-talented seniors? Happily there is no need to detract from his renown. He had a larger scheme in view.

It was well known that the raid on Rochefort had attracted thither some 20,000 men. If Pitt had underestimated its importance, Ferdinand of Brunswick's applause corrected the impression. The Hanoverian difficulty would be much simplified, he wrote, if such a diversion could be repeated. With 20,000 men idle at Rochefort, the obvious course was to change the point of impact. Constant attacks widely distributed would either congregate on the sea-board the whole military arm of France, or force her fleet to come forth and police the coasts. Either result was a consummation devoutly to be wished. According to the war minister's latest idea Howe, by attacking some point in the Channel, was to lure the fleet of Brest from its haven, while Hawke awaited the happy exodus, and darting upon his prey would strike it dead.

This was the scheme unfolded to Hawke when in response to an urgent summons he visited the Admiralty. Howe's operations in the Channel formed part of a larger scheme to be committed to himself. It would have been more usual to communicate everything to the Commander-in-Chief, and leave him to deal with details; but on the other hand, his own departure had been

HAWKE

unnecessarily precipitate. The situation was one of extreme embarrassment. It was Anson of course who set things right. In his capacity as First Lord he nominated himself Admiral in command of the leaderless Channel Fleet, and as Commander in the Channel he invited Sir Edward Hawke to serve as his second in command. Sir Edward, eager to make amends, accepted with avidity, and the two great victors of Finistere set forth in company.

Under the circumstances it is not perhaps surprising that the French decided against the employment of their fighting fleet. Howe was therefore enabled to carry out his part of the performance without interruption from the side of the sea.

The first expedition which he conducted was under the military command of the Duke of Marlborough, whose name augured well for the success of the venture. St Malo was selected for attack, and in June a landing was safely made at a point well removed from the town. From here a raid was planned on the shipping in the harbour. Four warships and more than sixty merchantmen, stores, sheds and shipyards were delivered to the flames. The French sustained damage amounting to £750,000. But the Duke liked not the prospect of besieging the town, which he reckoned was well able to hold its own until sufficient troops rallied in its defence. He therefore quitted the place, leaving his silver tea-spoons behind. The French with ironical courtesy sent them after him. They were not to be crushed by every Duke of Marlborough. The Duke himself declared that he had had enough of buccaneering, and transferred his activity to the camp of Prince Ferdinand.

In August, Howe escorted a new venture under General Bligh, whose age unsuited him for such work. A landing was made at Cherbourg, which was not at that time the place of importance it became under the Napoleons. For a week the English occupied the harbour. They destroyed the fortifications, pulled the town down, fired the thirty ships in the basin, demolished the piers and ruined the anchorage by sinking ships full of stones. Then under the careful dispositions of the Commodore, the whole force re-embarked in perfect safety, and transferred itself elsewhere.

In September a second descent was made on St. Malo. The troops were landed to the west of the town; but unpropitious weather impeded the co-operation of the fleet. The previous

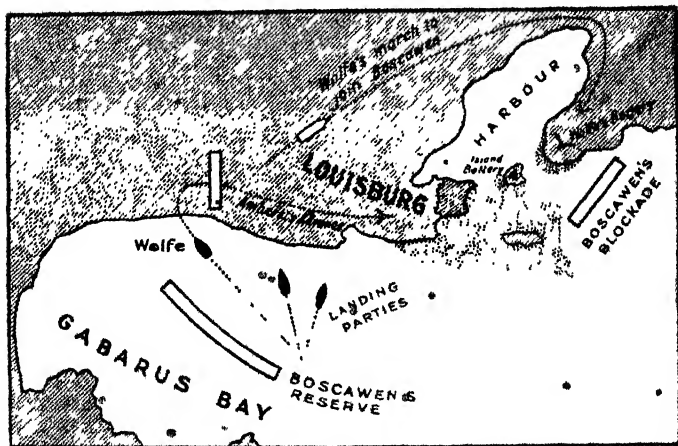
visit had put the French on their guard, and as their armies closed round him, poor General Bligh ordered the retreat. Had Commodore Richard been at his side as at Cherbourg, all might have been well. But no precautions were taken to cover the embarkation. Howe brought the fleet into the sheltered bay of St. Cas, but before two-thirds of the soldiery had been taken off, the enemy appeared. The unfortunate rear-guard stood at bay on the sand; but so horrible was the carnage in the approaching and departing boats that human endurance could bear no more, and the exertions of the rescue parties were relaxed. On seeing this, Howe himself got into a boat, and standing erect in the bows had himself rowed where the bullets were thickest. His example put new courage into every one; but in spite of all his efforts, a thousand men were left behind, and most of them were killed.

The cost in blood and money that these ventures involved was more than counterbalanced by the utter confusion into which they threw the whole French plan of campaign. Ferdinand felt the pressure upon him relax and won his first important victory; and Ferdinand's success relieved the pressure upon Frederick, who in August defeated the Russians decisively at Zorndorf. But the coastal descents were unintelligible to the British public, and were consequently most unpopular. "The Massacre of St. Cas" passed into a byword, and strategy so baffling was by admission more easily criticized than defended. "Breaking windows with guineas," Lord Holland called it, and though Horace Walpole besought his countrymen to "sail up the Rhone and burn Lyons," the second attempt on St. Malo was the last of an unusual series!

It was not until a week after the departure from Spithead of Anson and Hawke that active operations began at Louisburg. The passage across the Atlantic was unduly prolonged, and with better sailing luck the French might easily have arrived first,—if they had been allowed to start!

Nowadays it is a little difficult to realize the importance attached to Louisburg in the time of the Seven Years' War. Situated on the east coast of Cape Breton Isle it is now an obscure little fishing village, which has lost its importance almost as completely as Nombre de Dios and Porto Bello. This decay has been due

to the gradual rise of Halifax, whose princely waters can accommodate the entire British fleet. If the French could have retained Nova Scotia at the Peace of Utrecht, they would not have cared so much about Louisburg. In the absence of better, Louisburg was essential to them if they were to retain their hold on the Laurentian waterway. The town itself, handsomely fortified, was unassailable by ships from the side of the sea, though vulnerable by a naval force in possession of the harbour. This was only approachable by a narrow entrance little more than half a mile in breadth, and commanded by an island battery. The weak point in the French defence was the naval arm. The defenders of



LOUISBURG, 1758

Louisburg had but five ships of the line, and were consequently in no position to sally forth and drive the foe away. Their one hope lay in holding out till help should come from France. For this reason the siege of Louisburg was being conducted by Hawke in the Aix Roads and Saundefs in the Mediterranean.

Boscawen in the *Namur* brought with him from Halifax a fine force of more than twenty sail of the line, and a fleet of frigates, bomb-vessels and fire-ships. General Amherst had an army of 12,000 men and the invaluable services of Wolfe. On 8th June the army was landed under cover of the naval guns. To confuse

the enemy the troops were told off for different landing-places in three detachments, the more important Brigadier Wolfe being furthest removed from the town. At last, pushing home their attack, encountered all the difficulties which Sir John Mordaunt had anticipated at Rochefort. The enemy were ready for them, the surf played with the boats as a child with a shuttlecock, and the weather promised to cut them off from the fleet. But Wolfe rose superior to all difficulties, and though the boats were stove in, and the men flung into the sea, he fished them out, and gathered them on shore at the only point masked from opposing batteries. As he did so Amherst pushed home the other parties, and by threatening the French communications with the town successfully completed the most hazardous part of the undertaking.

The British now invested the place in form, but as they did so, the French sank their frigates to block the harbour mouth, and securing thus their warships from the ocean way utilized the heavier vessels with the utmost skill to enfilade their enemies on land. But the English were equally amphibious. Wolfe worked his way round the whole circuit of the harbour, and got into touch with Boscawen's blockading squadron. Then while Amherst engaged the town, these two great men played into each other's hands with a skill and harmony quite unprecedented. Wolfe's thoughts were devoted to the discovery of means for bringing the fleet into action: to prove his ships as productive of sappers and miners and the most perfectly equipped army corps was Boscawen's sole desire. Between them they erected a battery on the point of land opposite to Louisburg. By its aid the island guns were silenced. Mortars were then landed from the ships, and snugly ensconced round the harbour. Before the enemy realized what was happening, three of their five battleships were set on fire, and burnt right down to the water-line. This enabled Amherst to press home his attack, and Boscawen not to be outdone launched all his boats, and under cover of night sent them into the harbour to cut out the last two ships. The strictest silence was enjoined, for the enterprise was over-bold and hazardous. But as the ships were reached three ringing British cheers broke the silence and the *Prudent* and *Bienfaisant* were carried.

This last exploit rendered the harbour an innocuous pond, and

on the following day. Then Boscawen moved forward his ships with him, and on the 26th from the harbour, Louisburg surrendered. Cape Breton passed into the hands of England, and the fate of America was won.

Every church in England sent forth a joyful peal when the news came home; for the capture of Louisburg was an earnest of complete success for Britain's cause. Old men dreamed dreams, and young men saw visions of a future when the whole vast continent of North America should be held in perpetuity by the Anglo-Saxon race.

There was further cause for rejoicing, if men but knew, in this autumn of '58. In a little East-Anglian parsonage the vicar's wife presented her husband with a baby boy. The child was not nearly so plump as he should have been; and fearing he was not destined to live long they made haste to christen him, and chose the name Horatio. His arrival caused no stir in the land, and it is not certain that his parents were as grateful as they should have been, for they were already blessed with a family of five, and four of the five were boys. They certainly had no reason to suppose that this little morsel of humanity was destined to become by the admission of all the "greatest sailor since the world began."

The good news from Cape Breton went far to compensate the country for a disappointment elsewhere. Against the Marquis Montcalm in the Richelieu valley Pitt had sent the man whom Wolfe regarded as the finest creature in the whole British army, the "complete model of military virtue in all its branches." Lord Howe, the elder brother of the imperturbable Commodore Richard, understood the colonial troops as few of his contemporaries, and won from them a whole-hearted loyalty. With him were the splendid Highland regiments which Pitt had raised from the ranks of England's enemies. Hearts rose high; but unfortunately the gallant leader was the first to fall, and his death paralysed the brain power of the force. The repulse at Ticonderoga was a temporary set-back: the death of Lord Howe was a national calamity.

A year of crowded incident was brought to an auspicious conclusion by the happiest event. General Forbes, triumphing over a thousand difficulties, of which his own mortal sickness was not the least, carried back the flag to the Ohio valley, and re-christened

the fort of humiliation Pittsburg declared as he wrote to the Great Commoner, "it was in the morning of the 1st of August, 1862, that I was actuated by *your* spirit that now makes us

THE WONDERFUL

We have taken more prizes and ships in a week than would have set up such pedant nations as Greece and Rome to all futurity. If we but call Sir William Johnson, Gulielmus Johnsonus Niagaricus; and Amherst, Galfrida Amhersta Ticonderogicus, we should be quoted a thousand years hence as the patterns of valour, virtue and disinterestedness.

"P.S.—You shall hear from me again if we take Mexico or China before Christmas."

HORACE WALPOLE."

The first two years of the war not unnaturally led the French to underestimate England's power upon the sea: the events of '58 led them to reconsider their estimate. The Rochefort fiasco had not prepared them for the loss of Louisburg; but the loss of Louisburg recalled the conditions which had forced them to agree to the terms of Aix-la-Chapelle. So far from wasting energy in wrestling with continental chimeras, the English were deliberately aiming at the monopoly of America and the Indies. Unless France sent forth stronger fleets, she would be cut off from that empire which she had been at such pains to possess. She had done her best to entice England from an element on which she felt herself inferior; but she was not impotent. She might not be able to match herself with England on every sea, but she could launch a single mighty fleet capable of dealing effectively with one at least of England's squadrons. How then were such a fleet most usefully employed? America cried for help, but no longer provided a base of operations. The English now were the better circumstanced, and could close the St. Lawrence to reinforcements from France, however well-timed. Moreover, it was not yet certain that the English would push up the St. Lawrence. If they did, Quebec was excellently placed, and might certainly be trusted to hold out for one campaign at least.

Louis XV, King of France, resolved upon a bolder scheme: nothing less than the invasion of England. If advertised early in the year, this plan would throw his enemies into a state of panic, and paralyse their designs. They would cease to contend

plate further to the westward of America, or further operations against the coast of France, the probability they would behave as they had done in the Mediterranean, and would probably send Boscawen to the Mediterranean to secure the safety of Gibraltar.

Such reasoning was sound enough if William Pitt had been an ordinary mortal. But the Great Commoner was determined to follow up the Louisburg stroke, cost him what it might. Even when he received news of the threatened invasion, he decided to accept the risk. America must be conquered, and conquered in '59.

QUEBEC

JUNE TO SEPTEMBER, 1759

Pitt's plan of campaign was cleverly constructed. One army was to advance against Ticonderoga, avenge the death of Lord Howe, and open the road to French America by land: a second was to proceed by water up the St. Lawrence, complete the work of the preceding year, and cut the defenders of Ticonderoga from their base. Operations in the Hudson valley were confided to the trusty hands of Amherst. Quebec was a ruler of waters and required a composite force, as amphibious as that which had taken Louisburg.

Wolfe of course was chosen to command the military, but with an invasion in prospect England required all her great naval men nearer home—Anson at the Admiralty, Hawke in the Channel and Boscawen in the Mediterranean. As a coadjutor for Wolfe, Anson's choice fell upon one of his favourite sons, the sometime captain of the *Trial*. Charles Saunders had gone out with Hawke in the "Cargo of Courage" that replaced the unfortunate Byng: recently he had returned in triumph with the *Foudroyant*. Though not till now in supreme command his sterling worth and valour had frequently been tried; and it may safely be said that a better choice could not well have been made.

Saunders and Wolfe set forth in February and concentrated at their new base in Cape Breton Isle at the beginning of June. Wolfe had under his charge a siege-train and a small but efficient army of 8,000 men. Saunders, with his flag in the *Neptune*, had twenty sail of the line; and if transports be included, the vessels under his care numbered no less than 170.

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

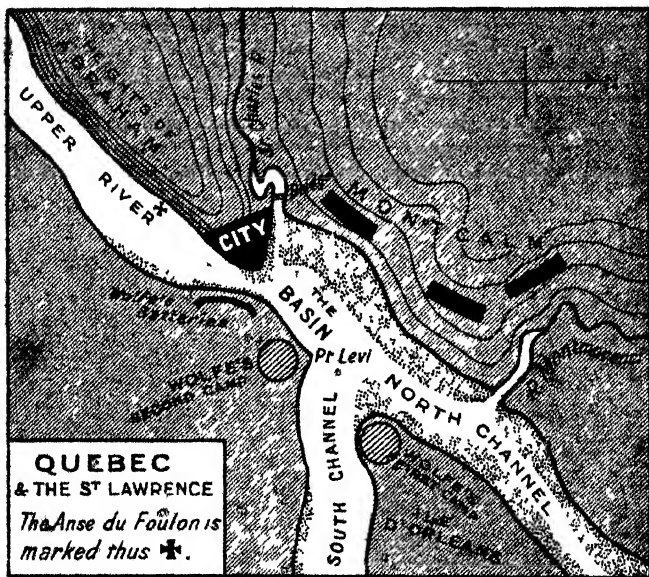
There were interesting personalities. Hugh Hallen, hereafter famous, commanded the *Albatross*. Then there was a Lieutenant with a shrewd face and twinkling eyes, called Jarvis, christened John, destined to do great things, and for the moment a warm favourite of Saunders. Not by any means least was James Cook. Born in Yorkshire of humble parents, he had felt the call of the sea in the establishment of a haberdasher near Whitby. For a time he served in the coasting trade or in commercial ventures to the Baltic. At the outbreak of war in '55 he had volunteered his services in order to secure the bounty offered to seamen, feeling certain that otherwise he could hardly hope to escape the "press." His four years in the service had been well spent, and 1759 found him exalted to the rating of Master. Aboard the *Pembroke* his ability and beautiful handwriting were well known, but none in the fleet could have prophesied that Cook was destined as a circumnavigator to make the name of the *Resolution* as famous as the *Centurion* or the *Golden Hind*.

Quebec, the hope and aim of the expedition, was at this time the principal city of French America. It was as unlike any of the growing communities of the New England states, as the government of French America was unlike that of English. Quebec was the Paris of the New World, the be-all and end-all of French American citizens. To England the capture of Boston, or Philadelphia, would of course be a serious matter; but if Quebec were to fall, there was an end to the dream of French domination as surely as death must ensue if the heart be pierced.

Quebec is situated far up the river, 400 miles from the western end of Anticosti; as far removed from the Gulf of St. Lawrence as Paris from the Gulf of Lions. For this reason the share of the fleet was from the first transcendently important. It was Saunders' duty to maintain communications with the open sea, and to escort the army as far as possible up stream in order to protect it from molestation by the way. Even when the fleet was prohibited from further advance, the army would be obliged to proceed for the rest of the way in boats; and to add to the Admiral's difficulties the navigation of the stream was known to be exceedingly difficult and intricate.

Whether Saunders coaxed the local pilots aboard by hoisting

the flag of France; whether he made use of charts prepared from the prizes captured by Boscawen in '55; or whether he simply relied on the skill of Cook and other warrant officers cannot with certainty be affirmed: but a week before the end of June, 330 miles of the journey had been accomplished with a facility passing expectation. Farther than this the *Neptune* and larger ships could not proceed. Saunders accordingly left them to guard and patrol the lower reaches; and shifting his flag into the *Stirling Castle*



QUEBEC, 1759

pushed his way onward with every ship that could bear him company.

A few days later the army landed on the western end of the Ile d'Orléans, a narrow island sprawling its length for more than twenty miles, and cleaving the river into channels, north and south. From this coign of vantage Wolfe surveyed the city long and anxiously. But his reconnaissance brought him no satisfaction.

Approached from the sea Quebec is set in the waters like an inverted triangle. The sides are washed respectively by the river St. Charles, and the river St. Lawrence, which unite at its apex to form a basin of considerable width. With certain vague topographical details in his mind Wolfe had pictured himself engaging the base of the triangle while Saunders shut off all hope of relief by a stubborn occupation of the basin. But Quebec was no commonplace replica of Louisburg. As Wolfe brought his inspection to an end, it seemed to him exceedingly doubtful whether he would ever be able to attack Quebec from the land at all.

Some eight miles below the city the North Channel receives the waters of the Montmorenci. Between this river and the St. Charles the ground is high, and provides a roomy platform dominating the waterway beneath. Montcalm, a master of his art, had not shut himself up within walls to undergo a siege. His forces were half as large again as the English, and he had drawn them up on this rising ground with his right resting on Quebec and his left on the Montmorenci. If his opponent made a frontal attack, the shallows below him would prevent the ships from any effectual participation in the encounter.

Reluctantly Wolfe confessed to himself [and to himself alone] that Quebec was practically impregnable. Nothing but a flank attack could possibly succeed: but where could a flank attack be delivered with the shadowiest prospect of success? It must at once be admitted that Louis XV's counsellors were not afflicted with overweening conceit when they informed their royal master that Quebec could be trusted not to yield to the pressure of a single campaign.

Every day that passed served to convince Wolfe that his salvation resided in the Navy. The very evening after their arrival Saunders' force gave proof of their steadiness and self-reliance. Hoping to drive his foes away before they had time to feel at home, Montcalm sent down upon them a bevy of fireships. The position of the invader favoured the attempt. Confined in waters that were as narrow as they were strange, but a little thing seemed necessary to throw them into panic and confusion. But the sailors, after duly admiring the fireworks, quietly grappled their ardent wooers, and towed them out of harm's way.

As soon as the fleet had comfortably ensconced itself between

Point Levi and the island, Wolfe set himself to investigate the extreme right of the enemy's position. To a water-borne force the city gap of the St. Lawrence offered an available passage. If successful in getting through, the invaders might turn the whole position; or at the least find a weak spot in the defence. But at the outset a difficulty arose. The water-gap was strait and circumscribed, and was commanded by the guns of the town itself. Saunders endorsed Wolfe's opinion, that the Upper River should be explored, but pointed out that every ship sunk in the effort to get through would contribute not a little to block the channel which was probably none too deep for fighting ships. Wolfe, quick to see where co-operation between Navy and Army was possible, resolved to erect batteries on the right bank of the river, and contest with the city batteries for the supremacy of the strait, just as he had done at Louisburg. Accordingly a new camp was made under Point Levi, and soldier and sailor essayed the construction of works that should silence the batteries on the opposite side. The task was necessarily of long duration, but was entered into with zest and good-nature.

While a part of his forces were hammering at the water gate Wolfe did what he could against the hostile left. But here again a watery difficulty intervened. The approach to the Montmorenci lay through the shallows of the North Channel which forbade the use of anything heavier in draught than a boat. Wolfe would have liked to disbelieve in the shallows; but then (as he told Saunders) he of course was only a landsman. Saunders, whose admiration for his military colleague increased from day to day, desired nothing so much as to find cause for Wolfe's disbelief. For the matter in hand he singled out his favourite John Jervis, whom he had just promoted by a convenient vacancy to the command of the *Porcupine* sloop. To the great surprise of the French onlookers, the *Porcupine* nosed her way into the North Channel, and under her covering fire, Wolfe was enabled to land a force on the bank of the turbulent Montmorenci opposite to that occupied by the French. The position was not rich in promise. In front lay a splashing foaming river, and beyond it eight miles of intrenchments, and 12,000 armed men. But at least a force had been landed on the enemy's ground and Montcalm might be tempted to remove it.

Montcalm was too cunning to be tempted, and the July days wasted away.

Meanwhile activity at Point Levi had brought its reward. The battery was erected, the range found, and the bombardment of Québec begun. The upper town was safe from the English gunners but considerable execution was wrought in the lower, and under cover of this the ships selected by Saunders ran the gauntlet about the middle of July, and reached the waters of the Upper River. One poor vessel was crippled in transit, but at last there was a possibility of properly investigating the right of the enemy's position. First acquaintance with the higher reaches afforded little comfort, for on the left bank the cliffs shot up like unscalable walls to twice the altitude of a high church tower: men called their roof the Heights of Abraham.*

Persevering exploration might reveal something more hopeful: and Saunders accordingly sent up every ship that could squeeze her bulk through the gap. After all there were French ships, that had taken refuge above the town, to be routed out: and if Amherst proved successful at Ticonderoga his route would carry him up the Richelieu valley, and the Richelieu joins the St. Lawrence a hundred miles above Québec. The departure of the up-river squadron left a sufficiency of ships for any occasion that might arise below the town.

The most troublesome feature in the British calculations was the time-limit. The seasons fought for Montcalm. Summer was on the wane, and winter would close the river in its grip of ice. The barren passage of time goaded Wolfe to madness, and on the last day of July he ordered an assault on the enemy's left. He thought to lead fresh troops ashore under cover of Saunders' guns while those already ashore below the Montmorenci pushed across the stream to their assistance by a ford which he had newly discovered. Ere the forders were in motion the wild impetuosity of the landing-party ruined a scheme which was in any case probably hopeless. Seeing no good could come of this attempt, Wolfe hastily withdrew his troops. And now the weight of responsibility, the fatigue of incessant endeavour, and the total want of success threw him into a dangerous fever. Grave fears were entertained for his

* To commemorate Abraham Martin, a pilot.

life; sadness fell on all; and August wore itself away proving as barren as July.

At last from the ships in the Upper River came something resembling good news. Quebec, it seemed, was not all-sufficing but drew her supplies from a depot further west. The chance of cutting this communication was infinitesimal; but the mere menace was enough to alarm the French who had evidently detached a considerable quota of their force to shadow the ships as they worked their way up stream.

Now also came news that the colonial General Johnson had captured Fort Niagara, and that General Amherst had taken Ticonderoga itself.

All this brought new life to the stricken commander, and did more for him than all the doctor's stuff. He insisted on being patched up; and finding his legs again hastened to prepare for that glorious stroke which has exalted his name to the skies.

Montcalm had played his part with skill and patience. He had done nothing rashly, and had interpreted his opponent's moves almost before they were made. His own position was formidable and easily defended, but this did not blind him to his adversary's strength. The amphibious nature of the English enabled them to shift their point of attack with a mobility unattainable on land. Montcalm eyed them narrowly. Early in September he saw Wolfe remove his army from the bank of the Montmorenci. What did this portend? His spirits rose as he observed active preparations for a frontal attack. The general was clearly concentrating his force at some convenient spot: the admiral was busy with soundings and buoys. Could it be that the English, mad with disappointment, were about to assail his main position after all? Then there were those ships in the Upper River. What were they after? He had his own interpretation. He believed that Wolfe was threatening his communications to induce him to divide his force. Either he meant to make good this threat; or he meant to deliver another frontal attack when he heard that sufficient reinforcements had been detached for the extreme right wing. In order to deliver the correct counter Montcalm required to know how many of the English troops had been removed to the Upper River. Here his information failed

him, for the silent mysterious wooden walls might conceal merely the usual complement of mariners, or be crammed as full of warriors as the deceitful horse of Troy.

It went to his heart to weaken his central force, but the menace to his lines could not be ignored, and he bowed to necessity. In doing so, he knew that he was playing Wolfe's game. He felt sure that when his army had been divided Wolfe would hurry back, his up-river troops; join them with those at Point Levi and the Island; and under cover of the naval guns hurl his entire force on the enfeebled legions of France. Whensoever delivered a frontal attack would not take him unawares. He had not been out of his uniform since June.

But there was something rather ghastly in the hours of waiting. Sometimes he feared that Wolfe might really endeavour to pass home the sent on his right; again, he comforted himself with the thought that his lieutenant Bougainville was worthy of his trust; and the difficulty of the ground would surely discourage the most courageous.

What he expected was a surprise attack on his front, an advance under cover of darkness; and on the 12th September his anticipations seemed about to be realized. The night was pitchy black, but the sentries could discern movement in the British fleet. The Admiral was pushing in as near as possible to the main position. Now the evening stillness was broken by the crash of the cannonades. The ships were doubtless preparing the way for the approach of the boats, those boat-loads of the dauntless who had wrought such woe for France in the bay of La Hogue, who only last year had cut out the last two ships in the harbour of Louisburg.

Every eye peered forth into the blackness, but the night was impenetrable. "Courage, countrymen! Shall we drive back the invaders of our hearths as we did in the bay of St. Cas!" Why came the peril no nearer? Had the boats crept in unobserved? Were they delaying their attack till morning light revealed the lie of the land? Mischievous was afoot: and terror was vested in more awful forms by the power of imagination.

At last came the dawn streaky and grey. And then in those pale and uncourageous hours came the awful news. The entire British army was drawn up in ordered array on the Plains of Abraham, at the very gate of the city!

Montcalm could not credit the news. The report was exaggerated. The force on the heights was an isolated fraction. But fresh reports came in and showed only too plainly that his interpretation of Wolfe's last move had been entirely at fault; that the genius opposed to him had outplayed him, outwitted him and had the game in his hands. The gallant defender of Quebec hastened to transfer his troops from one side of the Charles to the other; but in the hurry and confusion which he strove so nobly to suppress, he recognized the shadow of a great calamity.

Wolfe had staked his all on the chance of a single throw. He had discovered above Quebec a little path, a mere goat-track which led from the river-bank to the heights above. Only one man could ascend at a time, and Montcalm, whose keen eye had examined every nook and cranny, had established a picquet to guard it. Therefore the place might well have been consigned to oblivion. But Wolfe saw in it a staircase up which he would ascend and claim for his country the dominion of America. Most people can walk up a staircase. Many could clamber up the Anse du Foulon. But how could Wolfe dare to carry up an army under the very nose of a commander so sleepless as Montcalm?

The ships in the Upper River were intended to keep Bougainville in his detached position. They would have done so with their normal complement. Wolfe had utilized them as silent receptacles for at least the half of an army, which he did not mean to use in the way that Bougainville expected. According to the plan worked out in collusion with the Admiral these ships were to play a double part.

In the falling light of the appointed afternoon they would push their way up stream as if to menace a new found landing-place. The ever watchful Bougainville might be trusted to follow anxiously along the bank. Thus the entire right wing of the enemy's force would be set in motion in a direction diametrically opposite to the point of danger. Then as the night wrapped a curtain round the floating force, the ships would drop their boats upon the water; half of the up-river army, about 2000 strong, would embark therein; and the swift current would carry them down with noiseless rapidity to the foot of the chosen staircase. The ships themselves less wieldy would follow with the second

half of the up-river force, and arrive at the landing stage about the time that the last of the first detachment had worked its way aloft.

Simultaneously the remainder of the land force stationed in camp at Point Levi would march up stream upon the southern bank and assemble in readiness to be carried across as soon as the ferry boats were empty. Meanwhile the heavier sail of the line still located in the basin opposite the town would move inshore with a noisy energy that bespoke a frontal attack in force. All things went well the entire French army, right, centre and left would be debarred from taking the smallest part in the night's proceedings.

To engage the enemy's attention Wolfe relied wholly on the ships: but his reliance on the naval arm did not stop here. Having decided upon his stroke and accepted the risk, he left every arrangement in Saunders' hands. The task of conveying the soldiers and landing them under stress of no ordinary excitement on a night as black as pitch at a point difficult to discover in daylight was by the sailor cheerfully accepted and faithfully fulfilled.

Before the first step of this momentous scheme was taken Wolfe demanded and was of course accorded a final word with the commander of the *Porcupine*. Jervis and he, though separated by a certain gulf of years, had been educated together at Greenwich in their boyhood, and it was to his old schoolmate that Wolfe chose to entrust a particular service. He realized the extraordinary risk of the resolve that he had taken; he realized that it might be his privilege to make Old England richer by his death; and as he thought of those at home whom he might never see again, with a husky voice and a tell-tale tear he confided to his friend a tender message and parting token for her who looked to see him "come again with joy and bring his sheaves with him".

The boats moved forward in a silence unbroken save by the dip of the oars and the cry of a whippoorwill among the trees. The men had orders not to speak a word. But in the leading boat Wolfe recited to the little group with him, verses from Gray's *Elegy*, a poem then not ten years old, but ripe already in the promise of immortality. What little noise he made was heard by the watchful sentries of the French who rapped out their challenge

through the darkness. Wolfe was prepared for this, and back came the answer in irreproachable French, "Ce sont des bateaux chargés de provisions pour la ville. Pas de bruit si vous ne voulez pas que les Anglais nous entendent."

At last the chosen staircase was found, and all night long the sailors laboured bringing boat-load after boat-load to the landing-place. In the distance the crash of Saunders' guns told them that the Admiral was keeping the Frenchmen engaged and that all would yet be well. The ship-loads followed the boat-loads, and then the Point Levi army was ferried across. And still those stout arms tired not: and when the last soldier was up, with that perfect combination of ingenuity, good-nature, strength and disinterestedness which distinguishes the British sailor over every other fighting machine since the world began, they managed to haul up the guns as well, one after another, while the dawn approached, to that cheerful accompaniment of cannon in the distance.

When broad daylight succeeded dawn Saunders knew that there was no longer any use in continuing the bombardment. Inactivity was impossible, and his fertile brain devised fresh ways of helping Wolfe. He unshipped his 24-pounders, and sent them in boats to the Anse du Foulon with orders that they too should be carried to the summit.

Even as he did so Montcalm hurled his force against the best-disciplined army that ever trod. Wolfe, after a fashion that only a ship's captain could properly appreciate, reserved the fire of his whole long line till the foe were within point-blank range. Then came three withering volleys in sonorous unison, and the army of France was mown down quicker far than grass beneath the mower's scythe. Nothing could stand before that deadly hail. They turned; and Wolfe allowing Montcalm no time to rally, put himself at the head of his troops to sweep his adversaries from the field. His first wound he noticed not, and when the second bore him to the ground, his mighty soul paused upon the threshold of life until he received the happy assurance that the French were routed, and America was won.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

It is not every day that there is a continent for the winning, but it is not every day that the Army and Navy working together in harmony so perfect as they showed before Quebec.

No one mourned the loss of Wolfe more sincerely than the Admiral who had loved him and given him of his best. In more senses than one Saunders was the poorer. Had Wolfe descended from the Heights of Abraham alive he would most certainly have attributed to the Admiral the credit which he would never claim for himself.

Had Saunders been fashioned differently the siege of Quebec could never have been brought to a conclusion so triumphant. "He was," says Horace Walpole, "a pattern of the most sturdy bravery; united with the most unaffected modesty. No man said less or deserved more." A vacant seat awaits Saunders among the immortals; but though his admirers have often claimed it for him, the Admiral himself seems loath to sit in it.*

Though the French did not expect the fall of Quebec, the possibility of its capture had not entirely escaped their calculations. Quebec was the bait in the ingenious trap of their Invasion Scheme. If the English were frightened by the look of the trap, the bait would be saved. If they sniffed at the fragrance of the bait, they would betray their indifference to the trap: if they ran greedily towards it, they were in a fair way to be caught.

Strange as it may appear, Saunders' expedition gave ground for satisfaction at Versailles. The bait, it was true, might be swallowed. But would England have allowed a force of such magnitude to leave her shores if she had imagined herself in peril?

* Saunders was knighted in 1761, and during the latter part of the war commanded in the Mediterranean. On a lucky day his greyhounds brought in the *Hermione*, most remarkable of prizes ever taken. When all expenses were paid there was still half a million to be divided. Saunders received £65,000 and the bluejackets £500 a piece. These reckless creatures "bought up" all the watches at Portsmouth and fried them over the galley-fire; they passed a formal resolution making a gold-laced hat a necessary part of every sailor's equipment, and were only restrained from inflicting summary punishment on one unhappy wight, who appeared in one ornamented only with silver, by his assurance that he did not go to the hatter's till the more costly articles were all gone, but that he had made the man take the money for a gold. [Yongel]. Sir Charles succeeded his master as First Lord in 1766, and died in 1775.

Twenty of her battleships, the pick of her troops, and the most talented of her generals on the other side of the Atlantic, and her infatuated Premier blissfully incredulous of danger!

England was walking blindfold to her doom!

Even the most supercilious will acknowledge that the details of the Invasion Scheme showed commendable originality. Fifty thousand men, widely distributed, were to be concentrated only at the very last moment. In order to conceal the point of embarkation, flat-bottomed boats were to be constructed at every port. "The Mediterranean squadron," when ready, would run through the Straits of Gibraltar, and unite itself to the Brest contingent. This grand fleet would serve merely as a covering force to convey half the military across the sea. Its itinerary would not be that of the Spanish Armada in 1588; but of the little *Doutelle* in 1745. It would be discovered of course upon its way, but would brush spasmodic resistance aside by its overwhelming strength. The army being landed on the Ayrshire coast would march on Edinburgh and hold it against all comers. This of course would stir English blood to fever heat and while the main fleet which had been uselessly guarding the Channel, sailed furiously up to Glasgow, the army [if Pitt had an army ready] would be hastened up to Edinburgh. Meanwhile the French ships, instead of tamely turning back into the arms of the English commanders, or awaiting an encounter in the mouth of the Clyde, would reverse the Armada route, continue round the north of Scotland and instead of attempting to force a way through the Straits, would make for a fixed point on the coast of Flanders, pick up the other half of the army which would have concentrated there, and carry it across to the east coast within a few hours' march of London.

Much sagacity is discernible in these details. There was wisdom in the avoidance of the carefully patrolled English Channel, and in the formulation of a plan which did not presuppose the defeat of the English fleet. It may further be admitted that with 25,000 men in Edinburgh, and 25,000 at Colchester, not even Pitt could have saved the situation. Yet the whole plan was based on fallacious reasoning.

England is a fortress. The silver sea "serves it in the office of a wall, or as a moat defensive to a house." The French not

only proposed to cross the moat and scale the wall; but with unconscious arrogance made sure of doing so. The general who invests a city knows that, other things being equal, he can starve the garrison into terms. But he cannot rely with absolute confidence on the result of direct assault. The French failed to see how exactly England answers to all the conditions of a fortress.

The defender of a citadel, they would have argued, knows the weak points of his defence. He places his sentinels along the wall, and the best of his troops in the outworks; he doubles the guard at every gate; and from his watch-tower, ever vigilant, surveys the movements of the enemy. But how could England know that her invaders meant to land a force in Ayrshire? How could she possibly foretell where the assault would be delivered? She had far too many gates to guard. She could not watch them all.

Here lay the fallacy. The water-gates of England are the ports of the enemy. Pitt knew that no force capable of conquering England would dare to cross the sea without an escort: he knew that the French bases capable of accommodating the needful fleet might be numbered on the fingers of a single hand. His sleep at nights was not disturbed by fears for Edinburgh or Colchester. He did not intend to set palpitating armies in a continuous circle round the coast. He would simply double the guard at every gate . . . send Hawke to Brest and Boscawen to Toulon. Of course the French Atlantic fleet might escape from Hawke, the Mediterranean might elude Boscawen. But no wise man would count on such uncertainties. Louis XV might sneer at England's army of defence, but it was upon the Navy under the good providence of God that the safety of the kingdom depended.

THE BATTLE OF LAGOS

AUGUST 18, 1759

The Mediterranean fleet with a journey to go was the first to approach completion. Admiral Brodrick with an insignificant force was watching British interests in those waters and sent home word of unwonted activity. Boscawen in the *Namur* hurried

out to take over the command, and at the beginning of May was off Toulon with reinforcements which brought his total strength to fifteen sail of the line.

From the moment of his arrival he made tireless efforts to entice the French out to sea, but Monsieur de La Clue was a man of experience, and did not mean to be drawn. For a time matters remained at a standstill. But at length two frigates, cut off from harbour by the English, sought refuge in an adjacent bay. Boscawen determined to fetch them out. Unfortunately the temporary haven was defended by forts and sheltered from the wind. Three of Boscawen's ships were becalmed under the batteries, and halted out with maimed limbs and purpose unfulfilled.

There was no Port Mahon now for resort at such a juncture. What was the Admiral to do? The dispatch of three helpless cripples to Gibraltar unattended was not to be contemplated. The division of the fleet at such a moment would but court disaster. To increase the difficulties which beset him provisions began to run out. There was no help for it. In July the whole fleet turned its back on the blockaded city; and early in August appeared at the Rock. Had it been possible to remain outside Toulon, Boscawen would have preferred to do so. In departing he set reliance on two points. The French would probably interpret his departure as a trick, and refuse for some time to venture out of port. When they did venture, they would be forced to run through the Straits, and here Rooke's conquest would enable him to let down the portcullis and deny De La Clue the right to depart.

On his arrival at the Rock, Boscawen instructed the *Gibraltar* frigate to ply incessantly across the Straits, and with her he arranged a code of signals in case the enemy appeared with unexpected suddenness.

De La Clue was not very long in making up his mind that Boscawen's departure was no subtle lure to tempt him to destruction. He interpreted the move at its right value, and with all haste to reach the Straits, hoping doubtless to find Boscawen unprepared. His progress was attended with all due caution. He determined to run through the Straits under cover of darkness, and to creep along the African side. At first glance the

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

does not seem to be particularly dignified; but the success of the French campaign depended principally upon the union of the squadrons in Toulon and Brest. Till that was accomplished nothing was to be ventured or essayed.

The light was just beginning to fade, and a haze to settle over the water on 17th August, when the *Gibraltar*, faithful watchdog, ran in and shrilly barked out the warning note arranged. The enemy were within the Straits and creeping through on the opposite side. News, which at any other time would have been hailed with delight, struck something like consternation into the hearts of oak in the bay. It was not as if the warning had been brought by frigates from Malaga who had given cumbrous battleships the slip.* Forty-eight hours or even thirty-six would have given the ambuscading force ample time to sally forth and hold the water-way. Had the whole fleet been in readiness anxiety must still have prevailed till the ships were out of harbour. But the fleet was very far indeed from being ready. The celerity of the French had taken them completely by surprise. The Admiral himself was ashore and even at the moment of the alarm in the act of sitting down to dinner. The *Namur* had not a single sail bent. Many of her sisters were in similar plight. Some were even worse off, with topmasts struck.

It certainly seemed as if the French object was no longer preventable. The Toulon fleet was free to join the fleet at Brest as in the days of Tourville and D'Estrées. The English were in a state of complete unreadiness; daylight was already gone; and the great French vessels swung through the Straits.

But Boscawen was there! He was on board again almost before they had told him the news. And his spirit infused itself into every man who served him. The work of days was crowded into minutes. Thousands of hands and a single will accomplished the impossible.

In three hours the British fleet was out of port, and nose down upon the trail!

De La Clue had laid his plans carefully. If he found the luck against him and an English fleet ready for pursuit, he had resolved

* The unprecedented demands made upon the English dockyards in this wonderful year left Boscawen practically unprovided with frigates.

to double round Cape Trafalgar to the safe recesses of Cadiz. If, however, fortune befriended him, he would crowd on sail and win through to Brest. Fortune had favoured him, and his good ship *Océan* spread her wings and carried him northward through the darkness. He had no more reason to suppose that the English were behind him than to doubt that his consorts were in front. When morning came he counted his brood, and discovered to his surprise, that of his twelve ships only seven were with him. For a moment his heart misgave him. "Another minute, and he discerned the laggards coming up behind. Backing his mainsail he signalled to them to make all sail. They conducted themselves strangely, coming on apace, but to his secret signals scoring reply. As they loomed larger he counted them; not five there were, but eight. Was it possible? He was holding witless conference with the enemy. It was now his turn to make sail, and he set every inch of canvas to woo a fickle wind.

The five missing ships had played the truant. Wilfully or stupidly misunderstanding the Admiral's instructions, they had not waited for daylight to resolve their doubt, but under the shadow of night crept into Cadiz. They were, it is true, the smaller ships of the fleet, but their action was none the less reprehensible, and left the Commander-in-Chief with but half his force to add to that at Brest, and with but seven ships if needful to fight against fifteen.

Not fifteen: amid the excitement of pursuit Boscawen had fared little better. The *Namur* with seven consorts had got away well before the rest, and when morning revealed the Frenchmen with their wild signals flying, the remaining English ships under Admiral Brodrick were far enough astern. If the foe were overhauled and brought to battle, the engagement would be fought on something like equal terms, for two of Boscawen's ships were only "fifties," while De La Clue's were all third-rates, save the *Océan*, and she was an "eighty" and one of the finest ships afloat. On board of her, serving in a subordinate capacity, was De Suffren, soon to win for himself one of the finest reputations as an admiral in the history of France and of the world. Of Boscawen's captains Bentley of the *Warspite* had been Flag Captain to Anson at the First Battle of Finisterre, and at the Second had commanded the *Defiance* under Hawke. Captain Tom Stanhope of the *Swiftsure* had in the

previous year followed the little *Monmouth* in her chase, and with timely aid completed the subjugation of the *Foudroyant*.

It was seven o'clock in the morning when Boscawen realized that the foe had not as yet escaped him. He at once gave orders for a general chase, and as the hours passed the Englishmen realized that they were gradually overhauling the fugitives. One of De La Clue's ships, the *Souverain*, was a bad sailer, and the Admiral stood by her like a man. In doing so, of course, he lost ground, and about midday the leading British vessels were in a position to open fire on their opponents.

The *Centaure* in the rear of the French fought with glorious intrepidity. Her captain, De Sabran, must have been one of the godlike race of heroes who can breathe into his company the conviction that to die with him is better than to live. One English ship after another crowded round, but still the *Centaure* kept her colours flying. The end was inevitable, for none of her compatriots stood by to lend a hand. The sacrifice was not, however, useless, for if the *Centaure* immolated herself the rest of the force might escape.

Boscawen looked about vainly for the means of rectifying the misconstrued zeal of his subordinates. The signal to make more sail, or engage the enemy more closely conveyed nothing in particular to those who had sailed their swiftest to engage within pistol-shot. What Boscawen wanted was a signal embodying Hawke's manoeuvre at Finisterre the Second. "Each ship as she comes up to pass by the disengaged side of the ship or ships already fighting, and make for those immediately ahead."

The *Warspite* and the *Swiftsure* were quicker to apprehend, and towards the middle of the afternoon the *Namur* was able herself to give the lead which the quicker vessels had been so slow to appreciate. Forging ahead, making all the sail he could, Boscawen singled out the *Océan*, and a conflict of giants began. Boscawen was thirsting for battle and fought to slay. He carried his ship under the Frenchman's bows and poured in a terrific broadside. De La Clue, knowing the reputation of the man with whom he had to deal, made a dead set at his adversary's masts and sails. After a brief contest the *Océan* shot away Boscawen's mizen and both his topsail-yards, and sidled away from the grip of her opponent crowing with delight. Furious with his

ill-luck the Admiral instantly ordered his launch to be lowered, and his flag to be shifted to another ship. Such methods of fighting were not to be tolerated. He would take the whole French squadron yet.

As he wended his way in his barge, a shot from the enemy bored its way through the side of the boat, and the water came pouring in threatening to submerge them. Ever ready, with that power of instantaneous action that always marked him, Boscawen snatched his wig off his head, rolled it into a plug, and stopped the leak before the boat had shipped two bucketfuls.

The ship to which Boscawen shifted his flag was the leader of Admiral Brodrick's division now appearing on the scene. The proximity of this reserve force may account for the determination of De La Clue to continue his headlong flight, rather than turn to bay. Certainly it was of the most material advantage to Boscawen who had reckoned on its support. By this time the heroic *Centaure* had yielded. The dauntless De Sabran had endured eleven wounds, and had fainted not. The twelfth killed him. His decks were like a charnel-house: 200 gallant fellows had fallen. Boscawen detached one of Brodrick's ships to guard the gallant vessel, and with the rest he pressed on like a tireless hunter who sees the sun go down upon the chase while the wounded quarry still outpaces him.

All night long the chase continued. Boscawen's ships had suffered more than his men, but the reserve division gave him all he required. De La Clue had already lost heavily in men, but some of his ships had hardly been in action at all. Two of them, dastards, hidden by the darkness deserted their leader, and ran for safety whither the wind would bear them with its breath. When the sun looked down in amazement on the long protracted chase, De La Clue found that of his original twelve, four ships alone remained. Seven had left him in the hour of need, and the gallant *Centaure* lay bleeding among the fog. The cursed English still panted up behind, but before him glimmered the coast of Portugal some fifteen miles away. He may well have uttered a sigh of relief; if that were possible with one leg broken and the other wounded. But a few miles farther and neutral waters would be reached, neutral waters where the ships of Britain

would not dare to continue the action. There was some consolation in leading them such a dance only to balk them in the end.

De La Clue may have formed a sound appreciation of Boscawen's fighting quality; he was so well acquainted with his obstinacy. Balked of his prey? Not a whit! Neutral waters? Then why did the *foe* run into them instead of turning to fight like men? Rights of nations? Who infringed them first? If the French could go no farther, so be it. The end should be here. "Old Dreadnought" took no longer to contemplate the intricacies of the *Jus Gentium* than he did to get out of Gibraltar.

The last scene of the battle was enacted in the waters of Lagos Bay. The four French ships with varying fortunes had essayed an entrance. The *Océan*, the pride of the fleet, had run aground, and run aground with such an impetus that the shock had sent all her masts by the board. The other three, the *Redoubtable*, the *Téméraire* and the *Modeste* lay snugly under the forts of Portugal—the *Redoubtable* less comfortably than her sisters. Boscawen lost not a moment. For the stranded *Océan* he selected the *America* and bade her go and compass the end. His triumph was not to be graced by a captive Commander-in-Chief. In spite of his melancholy condition De La Clue had already gone ashore. But the *Océan* had fought her last fight. Her back was broken. Boscawen gave his orders and the smoke ascended voluminously skywards.

When Admiral Brodrick moved forward to deal with the *Modeste* and *Redoubtable* the Portuguese guns protested, but the Englishmen heeded them not. The *Redoubtable*, like the *Océan*, had done herself a mortal injury, and was consigned to the flames. But the *Modeste* was carried out amid cheers. The highest honour of all was assigned to one who richly deserved it. The *Téméraire* had been foremost in the fight against Byng. Captain Bentley of the *Warspite* carried her out, and added to the British Navy a noble vessel, and what was to prove under the Union Jack a famous fighting name.

There were great rejoicings in the fleet, and well there might be, for there had seemed little chance of such a result when the *Gibraltar* fired her warning guns off Europa point. The Admiral accepted congratulations in a manner entirely his own. "It is well," he said, "it is well;" and then digging his hands into his

pockets, and putting his head on one side in the posture Sir Joshua Reynolds has caught so well in his portrait,* he added wilfully, "but it might have been a great deal better." He had destroyed all but half of the enemy's fleet and scattered the rest to the four winds. The victory was complete. The force of De La Clée had for all practical purposes ceased to exist. And Boscawen was disappointed. But this is characteristic of great masters. They never see any merit in their own masterpieces.

The victory was not only complete, but it was of extraordinary value to England. Coming at such a moment, it went far to dispel the gloom that was settling over the country as people realized that the French menace of invasion was no empty one. The Duke of Newcastle purred with delight. "Admiral Boscawen," wrote Horace Walpole, "has in a very Roman style made free with the coast of Portugal, and used it to make a bonfire of the French fleet." When Mr. Pitt was told of this infraction of neutral territory, he replied, "It is very true, but they are burned." The great minister instructed England's representative at the Court of Lisbon to apologize for the violation of neutrality, and at the same time to make it perfectly clear that the captured ships would not be surrendered or the over-bold admiral censured. "Others make difficulties, you find expedients," he had said in other days to Boscawen. He saw no reason now to change his opinion.

He had indeed good reason to be jubilant, for the month of Lagos brought home also the glorious news of Minden. So far from success in the direction of Hanover, France had been vanquished; the arms of Prince Ferdinand had overthrown horse and rider; the household cavalry of the Bourbons had flung itself in vain against the English infantry; and a crowning mercy had saved the Electorate and established for Frederick an impregnable wall against which he could set his back at a time of sorest need.† It would have been gratifying to the motherland if she could have called Prince Ferdinand her son, but he had fought with English troops, and every one knew that the Marquis of Granby was

* It is said that in his youth Boscawen adopted a perverse habit of holding his head awry in mockery of an old family servant. The habit clung to the imitator and won for him a secondary sobriquet, "Wry-headed Dick."

† Künersdorf, 12th August,

SEA KINGS OF BRITAIN

a paladin whom Roland and Bayard would have clasped in brotherly embrace.

Leaving Admiral Brodrick to blockade the ships in Cadiz, Boscawen sailed for home. The news of the victory had been brought by his Flag Captain Buckle, to whom the King presented a little gift of £500. To the Admiral his Majesty tendered his warmest thanks, called him to be a member of his Privy Council, and appointed him a General of Marines with a sturdy salary. Captains Bentley and Stanhope were made happy with knight-hoods, and thus amid congratulations the curtain descends to the vibrant accompaniment of pealing bells.*

"We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is for fear of missing one. . . . Our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories. . . . One thing is very fatiguing—all the world is made knights or generals."

HEARTS OF OAK.

Come, cheer up, my lads! 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year,
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Hearts of oak are our ships,
Jolly tars are our men,

We always are ready:
Steady, boys, steady!

We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

DAVID GARRICK [1717-1779].†

THE BATTLE OF QUIBERON BAY

NOVEMBER 20, 1759

"And truly he did then strike his claws into him in a thunderously fervid manner, he and all his hands, in spite of the roaring weather,—a man of falcon, or accipitral, nature as well as name."—CARLYLE.

About the time that Boscawen arrived at Toulon, Hawke set sail for Brest to undertake a difficult task. He might keep the

* Boscawen did not long survive his victory. His pale face, steely grey eyes, and thin compressed lips suggest determination and endurance rather than redundant health. He died of typhoid (1761) at the age of fifty, and was laid to rest in Cornwall. His youngest son, inheriting the family title, became third Viscount Falmouth.

† In 1759 the inimitable Davy was playing nightly at old Drury to Crowder and appreciative audiences.

enemy in port for a time: but the more successful he was, the harder his task would prove. As the weeks went by his ships would grow foul, his men would fall sick, and the fighting capacity of both would sensibly diminish.

The weather in this summer of '59 was quite unusually bad. Yet, six months after setting out from home, Hawke was not only still at his post, but in excellent fighting trim!

He had sent his ships home two at a time to be re-watered, re-victualled, and in part at least purified and renovated. He had insisted that his companies should on these flying visits enjoy a rest and be liberated for a time from monotonous confinement between decks. He had established a line of transports to bring him fresh supplies of beef and beer. When he received inferior beer he poured it into the sea and sent for more: when he received inferior meat he demanded periodic consignments of live cattle. His tone was peremptory, but the Admiralty knew him by this time; and when he required that the victualling department at Plymouth should be instantly remodelled, his request met the meekest acquiescence.

The fleet was not only well-groomed and fairly well-fed. It was happy in the service of a commander who could communicate to others his own indefatigable enthusiasm. But then Sir Edward never forgot to commend a deed well-done. Whatever his pre-occupation no useful service escaped his notice or failed to win his thanks.

In his cheery messages home Hawke endeavoured to dispel the gloom that was settling down upon his country. Brest, he found, was not wholly unregenerate: for when the east wind brought the Frenchmen to their windows, he could snuggle under the eaves; and the west wind which swept him headlong from the door, denied the blockaded fleet an exodus.

During the month of August the weary hours were beguiled by *feux de joie* and salvos of applause in honour of Lagos and Minden. These were delivered where the sailors in Brest could hear them: but still the French commander gave no sign.

The year had been a disastrous one for France, but Louis XV. and his ministers were more determined than ever. Boscawen's victory had brought no swift conclusion to the invasion scheme, which was indeed more than ever necessary for the salvation of

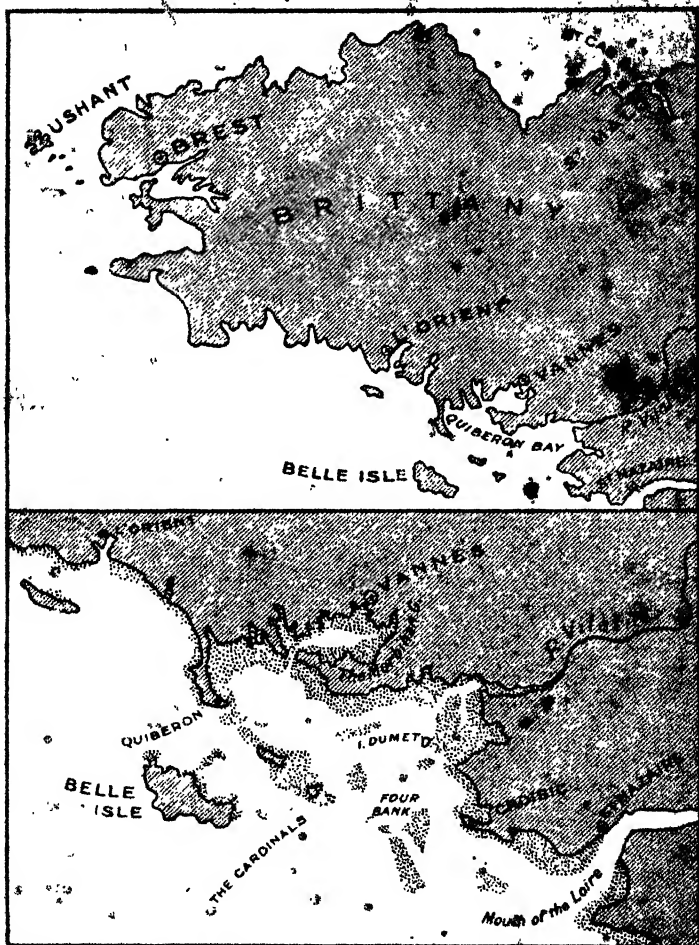
France. There were still warships in the West Indies. When these had been added to those in Brest there would be a fleet of more than twenty ships. Admiral Conflans would command them. He was a personal friend of the King and La Pompadour, a man of well-tryed courage and known repute as a sailor. He would escort an army of 20,000 men, more than half of whom were already cantoned at Vannes, a cathedral city on the southern shore of Brittany. Here the Duc d'Aiguillon, Commander-in-Chief, had his quarters in the Jesuits' College: here in the Morbihan, a deep ocean-cleft on which the city stands, he daily surveyed the transports destined to carry his fighting force overseas.

The preparations in the Morbihan did not escape the penetrating glance of Hawke. He detached from his fleet a little force of frigates under Commodore Duff to keep an eye on them.

The approach of winter made his own task increasingly difficult. An October storm forced him to carry the whole fleet to shelter in Torbay. He was back again before the enemy had noticed his absence. But the strain could not last. There was uglier weather brewing in the west. In November the agitation of his countrymen knew no bounds. They began to understand more clearly the determined resolution of the French. They began at last to suspect that Admiral Conflans was waiting expectantly for the season of gales and tempest. They began to apprehend the whole position almost as clearly as Hawke had seen it for six long weary months. Fervently they prayed for fair weather; but on 10th November they heard with dismay that the fleet was home again. On the 12th Hawke did his best to depart. On the 13th the winds brushed him back. On the 14th he was gone.

His flag flew proudly in a noble ship, the famous *Royal George*, the very last word in naval construction, the pride of Anson's heart. Laid down in 1746 she was but lately launched, and removed from British dockyards the reproach of shipbuilding talents inferior to those of the French. Round Hawke there gathered a goodly company. There were the Lagos knights, Sir John Bentley of the *Warspite*, and Sir Thomas Stanhope of the *Swiftsure*. There were Denis and Keppel to represent the *Centurion*,

and Hawke's Flag Captain too, John Campbell. There was Richard Howe, Viscount Howe since his brother's death still *jeune*



QUIBERON BAY, AND THE COAST OF BRITTANY.

et brave, and once again in his favourite ship, the *Magnanime*. Rodney and Brett alone were needed to make up a fleet of all the

talents; but at a time so stirring their services were elsewhere requisitioned.

Meanwhile the boisterous westerly wind which had driven Hawke from his station brought home to Brest the fleet of France from the Indies. Good fortune saw it safely into port, bringing mariners well-seasoned for the work in hand, and—the thrice welcome intelligence that the blockade was raised. Conflans lost no time, and on the very day that Hawke left English waters, he sallied forth from Brest in the *Soleil Royal* with a handful of frigates and twenty-one sail of the line. He made all possible speed in the direction of Vannes, but as he neared Belle Isle the wind shifted to the east and drove him in the contrary direction. A day or two later the weather mended somewhat; but now the wind blew from the north and carried him far to southward of the haven he desired. It was not till the 19th that a westerly breeze enabled him to beat northward to the mouth of Quiberon Bay.

The escape of Conflans was discovered by English vessels on the Breton coast; and one brought tidings to Commodore Duff maintaining his watch on the Morbihan. At daylight on the 20th he struggled to be gone, but the wind blew in his teeth, and off Belle Isle he encountered the fleet of Conflans advancing from the south. For the success of Conflans' project it was essential that Duff's tell-tale little squadron should not escape. The signal for a chase was hoisted and the Frenchmen one and all strained forward. Duff's ships were long from port. There was little chance of escape. The lesser fry scuttled onward, but the leviathan came on apace and opened its mighty jaws. Suddenly a strange thing happened. In Duff's own ship the entire company raised a ringing cheer, and then every man with one accord flung his cap to the winds.

There were sails in the west! They were Hawke's!

The news that set Duff in motion had travelled near and far. It had reached England and thrown the country into an unseemly trepidation. This was what came, men said, of Admirals' leaving their post without orders. The enemy were at sea! The country was doomed! And Hawke had dallied idly in harbour! The mob made a figure of him: and burned it to their own condemnation.

Elsewhere the news was differently received. It greeted gallant Saunders home returning. He had conquered a continent, and brought a weary fleet across the wide Atlantic. But he stayed not for orders. He turned his fleet towards the Breton coast hoping to be in time.

The faithful sailor who had perished in effigy heard the news off Ushant. Conflans was three days in front of him; and no one knew where he had gone. But Hawke by instinct knew.

He found a virtue in every wind that had puzzled his adversary. The east wind carried him round the Breton promontories. The north wind bore him to the latitude of Belle Isle. And when the breeze rose blustering in the west he spread his wings and swooped towards Quiberon in time enough to save his frigate squadron, and hurl a breathless challenge at the foe. Such are the merits of tireless wings, and an eye which nothing can escape.

It was early morning when Conflans discovered Hawke's sail on the horizon. He was uncertain what to do. The suddenness of the crisis seemed at first to leave him no alternative, and he gave orders to form the line of battle. But as his signals were obeyed he changed his mind. To fight with Hawke was none of his business. His fleet was designed for a definite object and that object was unattained till the Duc d'Aiguillon was landed in Scotland. The coast was near, and might well be reached before even the van of the enemy overhauled him.

The nature of the coast confirmed his resolution. Quiberon Bay is sheltered on the west by a "sickle-shaped" peninsula, whose curve is continued by islands and shoals south-eastwards to the Cardinals. Opposite to these upon the mainland lies the village of Croisic, and in front of Croisic the great Four sandbank waits hungrily for prey. Within these limits receiving the waters of the Vilaine and Morbihan lies an irregular basin, inhospitable, treacherous, and cruel, a labyrinth of hidden shoals, fringed with relentless rocks and sobbing crags. When all the waters of the summer sea are smoothed to a plain of heavenly blue, the breakers still lash themselves with noisy persistence in Quiberon, and when the nipping breeze of winter curls the wave-tops, in Quiberon the angry waters fret themselves into madness with crashing thunder.

Conflans had no doubt that his own fleet could enter. Every

ship had a Breton pilot. But he was not solely bent on forwarding the interests of D'Aiguillon's mission. He was deliberately laying a snare. He devoutly hoped that Hawke would follow him. Then as the trusty Croisicese guided his vessels into channels that none else knew, he would turn his broadsides on the hated foe as they foundered in the quicksands and split themselves on the shoals.

The weather too favoured those who knew the coast. The morn had opened dull and grey with a west wind blowing in squalls. But every moment the weather grew worse. The wind increased in violence; the rain descended in torrents and the gathering storm-clouds sunk thickly on the sea. The shortness of a winter afternoon would further confound confusion by the horror of thick darkness. If the English could be but lured into Quiberon Bay, France was assured a crushing victory.

Hawke had no mind to disappoint his foe. He knew the hideous chances that confronted him; but he knew also that England was in peril. He had no pilots in his fleet; but if he overtook the French, he would not need them. If the French ships avoided Scylla and Charybdis, his ships would do so too; for they would cling like limpets to their adversaries, and make of them involuntary guides. The risk was appalling, but Hawke accepted it without a moment's hesitation. So also would Blake have done, and so also would Nelson.

When Conflans made a show of battle array, Hawke hoisted signal for the line abreast spreading out his arms widthways in order to corner his foe and give all his ships the chance of coming up. But when the Frenchmen ran Hawke instantly changed his attack, executing a new manœuvre which his foresight had conceived. It was a delicate combination of the "Chase" and the "Line Ahead". It enabled the swiftest sailers in the fleet to run for the enemy, and as they ran to form one behind another in order of celerity. There were seven or eight ships immediately ahead of the *Royal George*, and Hawke felt sure that they could overtake the French and learn from their guidance the passage into the bay.

The waves were far too high for fighting work, and in each ship there were eight men at the wheel. But topsail reefs were shaken out, and every stitch of canvas set. So violent was the motion as

they struggled through the plunging cross-seas that men were hurled about the decks with risk of broken limbs. And ever the rain descended without pity, and the fury of men's hearts was matched by the inky blackness of the sky.

It was not yet two o'clock. Confians leading the way in the *Soleil Royal* had carried his van and centre round the Cardinals. But his rear under St. André du Verger was still outside, and the leading ships of the English were panting up behind—Howe in the *Magnanime*, Centurion Denis in the *Dorsetshire*, and Bentley in his celebrated *Warspite*. About two o'clock they fired at extremest range and half an hour later Hawke hoisted the signal to close. Between the sandbank Four and the Cardinals the battle was engaged and Du Verger in the *Formidable* felt the English impact first. He was a hero worthy of the finest traditions of French chivalry. Nobly he fought, but the attack was more than human courage or stoutest oak could bear: for the brood of the Hawke clanged out a broadside as they passed, and themselves plunged forward to overtake the van. One after another they came, the *Dorsetshire*, and the *Defiance*, and the *Swiftsure*. Howe, always impetuous, with his ship poised on a rolling wave hurled himself at Du Verger's flag and scraped his portlids off. Then came Keppel in the *Torbay*, and for a while the *Formidable* was dumb. Du Verger had been carried below faint from loss of blood. But when his wounds were dressed he sat on deck in a chair, and directed the fight till he died. It was to the *Resolution* that the *Formidable* surrendered. She was a brave ship, and she brought the British Navy a gallant name which has lost nothing of honour in the service of her captors.

Meanwhile Lord Howe in the *Magnanime* was enjoying himself like a king. His next adversary was the *Thésée* commanded by De Kersaint, accounted by many the finest sailor in France. De Kersaint had met Englishmen before off Cap François in the Indies. He made a gallant defence, and was not to be conquered in passing. As other Britons came to his assistance Howe pressed onward again to deal with those in front. The *Héros* was not so game an antagonist as the *Thésée*, and before long her flag came down. But now the tempest was madder than ever. All the winds had come to see these Titans fight, and as on Trojan plain of old, the powers of heaven took their part in an earthly

struggle. It was quite impossible for the boats of the *Magnanime* to live in such a sea, and the *Héros* unable to care for herself drifted away towards the breakers.

Following in Howe's wake came Keppel. Finding the *Thésée* in pugnacious mood, he poured his broadsides into her. De Kersaint recked little of the weather. He ran out his lowest tier of guns. They were heavy and could hurt. But the water poured in at his open ports and the *Thésée* with more than 600 on board sank to the bottom like a stone. Keppel was in little better case. His ship "was full of water, and he thought she was sinking; a sudden squall emptied his ship, but he was informed that all his powder was wet: 'Then,' said he, 'I am sorry I am safe.' 'They came and told him a small quantity was undamaged—'Very well,' said he, 'then attack again.'"

"This thunderous miscellany of cannon and tempest" did not go unobserved. The army of the Duc d'Aiguillon swarmed along the coast, and strained their eyes through the driving rain to see how the battle went.

A short time before the *Thésée* sank at Keppel's side, the *Royal George* swung past bent on bringing Conflans himself to battle. But the *Soleil Royal* was inside the bay, and no man could foretell what would happen if Hawke's mighty ship went hunting among the shoals. It was different for a 74. Hawke slackened not his speed for a minute. The master therefore approached, and entered a respectful but urgent protest. "You have done your duty," said the Admiral, "in pointing out the danger; you are now to obey my commands and lay me alongside of the *Soleil Royal*."

More than one French ship endeavoured to interpose, and save her Commander-in-Chief. Hawke found himself confronted by the *Superbe*. In one terrific burst of sonorous sound came his broadside. There was no need of a second! As the gunners prepared to load again, they were amazed to see three topmasts disappear. Mortally wounded by a single blow the gallant 74 went down with all her hands. The like had not been seen, but no cheer arose from the *Royal George*. The tragedy was too sudden, too complete. Rescue was impossible among such surging waves.

The sinking of the *Superbe* put a period to the defence. It

was now past four o'clock, and darkness lent new terror to the scene. Hawke found the *Soleil Royal* and engaged her at close quarters, but she sidled away unwilling to fight with him. Who could cope with such a combatant, sending good ships to their doom with a nod, in league like enough with the powers of the deep? Panic and craven terror seized the French. They thought no more of fighting, but groped for outlets from a fatal trap, and huddled away in the darkness like impotent pale ghosts. Nothing more could be done that night and Hawke gave the signal to anchor.

Not one half of his force had entered the bay, but less than half had sufficed!

When morning revealed the steeples of Croisic in the south-east, Hawke found himself some two miles to the south of Ile Dumet. Confians with involuntary unwisdom had selected a similar berth. Hauling up his anchor the Marshal of France fled precipitately eastward, and running his ship upon the rocks forfeited a hard-earned reputation for competence and valour. Howe's victim, the *Héros*, was already aground on the Four, where the waves had been mercilessly chafing her all through the night. Hawke despatched the *Essex* and the *Resolution* to give the finishing stroke to these victims; but the wildness of the weather and their own ignorance of the locality drove both executors aground upon the Four; and Hawke postponed further operations till the weather abated. On the 22nd he sent frigates to burn the *Héros*, and when the *Soleil* saw her fate approach she fired herself and for ever set.*

When Hawke called a reckoning of injury inflicted on the foe, he was disappointed. Five ships only had been accounted for; two had been sunk, and two destroyed, and the *Formidable* taken.

But he based his first estimate upon the damage done by broadside, fire and storm. He had omitted from his calculations the moral effect produced, when in the gathering dusk he had plunged among his enemies spreading terror through their ranks. They knew well enough who it was, when the *Superbe* had drunk her death!

Seven ships most miserable, together with the frigates, found

* After saving their crews Hawke gave orders also for the burning of the *Resolution* and the *Essex*.

the mouth of the river Vilaine. There was little enough water on the bar; but by dint of hurling everything overboard they scrambled in when the tide rose, and found a berth where even Hawke could not pursue them. The Vilaine proved unpatriotic to the point of depravity. It heaved these good vessels on its bosom, and then emptying its waters into the sea, bumped them down ingloriously on its bed. This heartless process it repeated at every tide until the fighting ships of France broke their backs from sheer vexation of spirit.

Other nine, the last of the fleet, found an end something more comfortable but no less ignominious. Navigating successfully the channel between Croisic and the Four, they raced helter-skelter for safety. Southward they fled, southward and stopped not. All save the *Juste** reached the friendly waters of Rochefort. But still in imagination they felt Hawke swooping up behind, and dispensing with all that was dispensable they floundered into the Charente, resolute never again to sail the sea while that deadly, pitiless bird terrorized the waters.

The victory was decisive. The last fleet of France had ceased to exist; and this tremendous result had been achieved by ten or eleven ships, by the calculating temerity of matchless seamanship, and by the magic of a wonderful name. France lost between four and five thousand of her seamen. Hawke's casualties numbered less than 300 with only one officer killed. The invasion scare was over: the all-conquering expedition "found its terminus—not on the shores of Britain, but of Brittany to its surprise." England was mistress of the sea again, as she had never been since the days of Rooke. She was free at last to forget the bitter shame of Minorca. Hawke restored to Britannia's hand the trident that Byng had lost.

'Twas long past noon on a wild November day

When Hawke came swooping from the west;

He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon bay,

But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.

Down upon the quicksands, roaring out of sight,

Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night;

But they took the foe for pilot, and the cannon's glare for light,

When Hawke came swooping from the west.

HENRY NEWBOLT

* The *Juste* went down off the mouth of the Loire.

The glorious news was carried home by Hawke's Flag Captain, Campbell. He had begun life in a Scottish coaster, which upon occasion was visited by the "press." Campbell's apprenticeship rendered him immune, but he volunteered in place of a tearful mate, and served as a petty officer to Anson on his voyage round the world. It was Anson who escorted him to the royal presence with the news, and on the way the First Lord made it clear that the King was ready to confer on him a knighthood. "I doot it wadna mak muckle odds to me," said the bearer of good tidings. "But your lady might like it," coaxed Anson. "Weel, weel than," came the answer, "His Majesty can mak her a knight gin he be sae mindet."

When Hawke himself came home enthusiasm knew no bounds. Parliament tendered the Admiral effusive thanks and a yearly grant of £2,000. The King protested that no one but "his Captain" could have done such a thing, and gripped Sir Edward's hand with a father's cordiality. The medal which he caused to be struck is ornately appropriate. On the reverse England armed with the thunderbolt routs the allied forces of Tempest, Night and France. On the obverse Britannia mounted on a sea-horse shoulders her trident like a warrior well pleased.

Quiberon saved the new-born British Empire. It confirmed England in the transatlantic conquest which Wolfe had won for her. But England ill-rewarded those who had wrought salvation! An earldom had been little enough for Hawke; as for his captains, they had [in his own phrase] "behaved like angels." The commanders of the *Essex* and *Resolution* were indeed tried by court-martial for the loss of their ships, and honourably acquitted. But this indulgence concluded the outward manifestation of the national gratitude. It mattered little enough then. Hawke was too modest to notice anything omitted. To have saved his country brought its own reward. But neglect so callous has deceived posterity, and blinded succeeding generations to the importance of the victory, and the peerless worth of the victor.*

The Earl of Chatham is in part to blame. * He has monopolized the glory of a golden epoch. "The ardour of his soul," says Lord Macaulay, "inflamed every soldier who dragged the cannon up the heights of Quebec, and every sailor who boarded

* There is no monument to Hawke either in the Abbey or at St. Paul's.

the French ships among the rocks of Brittany." Nobody can doubt that he "imparted to his commanders his own impetuous, adventurous and defying spirit;" but Hawke needed no such attribution. Pitt did not enter office till 1757; his great sea-captain had ten years before acquired off Finisterre an imperishable fame. "Pitt had no need," writes Captain Mahan, "to discover Hawke. . . . He might as well be thought to have discovered the sun."

Hawke's private life was as blameless as his public life was brilliant. He hated parade as much as Anson did; was as just and righteous as Blake; and scorned self-profit and aggrandizement. He long survived his brother-in-arms Boscawen, and more than twenty times he quietly celebrated a certain feast in November. For a period he served as First Lord of the Admiralty; but for the most part his latter years were blessed with quiet, "sleep after toyle, port after stormie seas, ease after warre." His task was finished. For twenty years his victory kept the French innocuous; and when fresh troubles came, Keppel, Rodney and Howe, his chosen sons, were there to deal with them. In 1776 King George II's grandson persuaded the "Father of the Navy" to accept a barony. Five years afterwards at the ripe old age of seventy-six the victor of Quiberon died, and was buried at North Stoneham in the County of Yorkshire.

The generation that lived through the "Wonderful Year" honoured one toast more frequently than others. With a clinking of glasses they drank to a pledge which to-day might serve as a prayer. "May all our officers have the heart of a Wolfe and the eye of a Hawke."

Britannia triumphant, her ships sweep the sea;
 Her standard is justice, her watchword "Be free!"
 Then cheer up, my lads! with one heart let us sing,
 "Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen and King."
 Hearts of oak are our ships,
 Jolly tars are our men;
 We always are ready:
 Steady, boys, steady!
 We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

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